Vatican and Kremlin *by Louis Fischer*

The Nation

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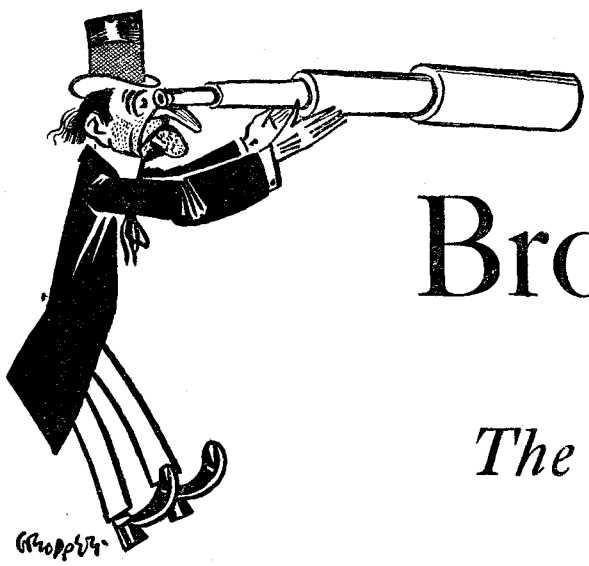

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by Gardner Jackson

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by Felix Morley

Lame-Duck Diplomats

by Paul Y. Anderson

Lord Newton's "Lansdowne"

reviewed by Sidney B. Fay

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OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, Editor
HENRY RAYMOND MUSSEY, Managing Editor
Associate Editors
FREDA KIRCHWEY
DOROTHY VAN DOREN ARTHUR WARNER
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THOSE ADHERENTS OF THE LEAGUE of Nations who brought General Smuts to this country were well advised in doing so. They could have invited no one who would impress the thoughtful public more, for he has been a discriminating critic as well as a supporter of the League since its inception. Moreover, General Smuts is the accredited inventor of the mandate system; it appeared first in his proposal for the League of Nations which *The Nation* had the privilege of publishing in America early in 1919. That the idea was born of a laudable purpose to improve the administration of backward nations by the self-appointed colonizing nations is beyond question. General Smuts is certainly not to be blamed for the failure of the League of Nations to supervise the mandatory Powers as he planned that they should. We cannot help wondering, however, if any system by which government is imposed upon any people by another can ever be made honorable or workable or bearable. Certainly the dark spots on General Smuts's own record are his relations with the exploited races in South Africa and the use of force to control them. None the less we recognize that General Smuts is one of the few great men of the world, and we especially recall with gratitude that although he signed the Treaty of Versailles, he at the same time caused to be circulated a protest against it.

IT IS A MATTER FOR REGRET that the arrival of Count Karolyi in this country, from which he had been barred by the State Department for five years, should have been marked by misunderstanding between the count and his friends here, who have carried on a valiant fight for his admission. The Rand School of Social Science arranged with his lecture manager for a great welcome meeting in Carnegie Hall under the sponsorship of a representative committee of Socialists and liberals, including such men as Norman Thomas, Morris Hillquit, John Dewey, Charles A. Beard, and the editor of *The Nation,* to mention only a few. The American Communists, with their usual genius for mischief making, sent word to the count that the members of this committee were persons with the same views as those who support Horthy in Hungary—referring to the agreement between the dictator and the Hungarian Social Democracy. Thereupon Count Karolyi instructed his manager not to accept the sponsorship of the Rand School or other political groups, thus turning his back on his best friends in this country. Count Karolyi has been extremely ill advised in this matter. We are confident that his action has been due to a misunderstanding of the real situation here, and we trust that this unfortunate beginning may not interfere too seriously with the success of his lecture trip.

OF ALL THE SAD SHOWS ever staged, unquestionably the saddest was William B. Shearer's New York lecture on "The Inside Story of Ten Years of International Intrigue against United States Sea Power." Lost in the immense reaches of Carnegie Hall, three or four hundred persons sat in bored or amused silence while a handful applauded every other sentence as Mr. Shearer repeated his testimony of last summer before the Senate investigating committee, declaring pathetically enough that the Navy Department did not tell him that his celebrated "secret document" was a hoax. He was introduced by the incredible Admiral Fiske, who in a newspaper interview had already indorsed him: "I have looked into his alleged activities at Geneva and I find he was only doing what the government was trying to do. The only people he was opposing were the British." The London Conference, the Admiral declared, "is going to be the greatest game, played for the greatest stakes, that the world has ever known." That is exactly the nationalistic spirit which, as we pointed out last week, if unchecked will reduce the conference to nullity. The visit of Ramsay MacDonald did much to set the people of this country thinking in different terms, and the flat failure of Mr. Shearer's meeting is encouraging evidence that anti-British propaganda is at present unpopular. As we have already suggested, success at London depends on the delegates coming together in friendly spirit to do everything possible to lift a common burden.

A MASS MEETING in Faneuil Hall, protesting against a new massacre, though in Newport and not in Boston, sending a vigorously defiant message to the highest authority, and then tearing down official posters on Boston

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Common—what good reading that is! At last it seems Americans are capable of working themselves into a fury and asserting that they have rights and liberties which they intend to have respected. Since the war it has seemed as if the spirit of 1776 were dead, laid to rest by the war to end war. Not that we have much affection for the victims of the "Newport massacre"—three rum-runners, confessed lawbreakers, who were killed when their rum-laden craft was stopped by Coast Guard bullets. The meeting was on better ground when it protested against the cocksure way in which Assistant Secretary Lowman upheld the Coast Guard without making any inquiries as to the facts. He has, however, now been sustained by Secretary Mellon himself. But we should still rejoice even if the occasion for this protest were less worthy. The members of the Boston audience who were so vigorously outspoken to Mr. Hoover have done a genuine service. So, too, we like the continued pounding away of Senator Borah and the Drys in Washington. As we said last week, Mr. Hoover must be made to face this issue and must not be allowed to follow his usual custom of dodging. We are aware that there is a lot of the usual hypocrisy and politics in the Washington controversy, but still we rejoice in the protests.

WE THOUGHT that the Navy Department had safely bottled up General Smedley D. Butler for its own good and his, but we note with profound regret that he has fizzed over again. According to an Associated Press dispatch the brave general recently addressed an American Legion post in the outskirts of Harrisburg as follows:

> I believe that God made us the most influential nation in the world for a purpose, and that it is our duty to keep our neighboring nations from murdering one another.
>
> When the marines get a job, they go and do it. We are not diplomats. Soldiering makes a man direct in his methods and sometimes abrupt.

To kill people, as the marines have done in Haiti, in order to prevent them from murdering one another is, as the general says, direct, not to say abrupt. It reminds us of the State that proposed to make attempted suicide a capital offense.

MAHATMA GANDHI'S influence in India is still powerful, as the proceedings of the All-India National Congress at Lahore show, but the immediate outlook for the Swaraj or home-rule movement which he directs and inspires is not altogether clear. The congress, called to pave the way for a conference out of which, it was hoped, India would emerge with the much-discussed dominion status, rejected that solution of the problem by adopting almost unanimously a resolution offered by Gandhi demanding complete independence. No useful purpose would be served, the resolution declared, by Indian participation in the round-table conference at London at which the question of constitutional reform for India was to be threshed out, and the Nationalist members of the central and provincial legislatures were called upon to resign. But while a proposal championed by Subhas Chandra Bose, leader of the Youth League, for the adoption of a militant program was overwhelmingly voted down and a more moderate amendment deferring action on the question of independence was also rejected, the executive committee of the congress was nevertheless authorized to inaugurate whenever it thought fit a program of non-cooperation or civil disobedience, this last including non-payment of taxes to British authorities.

JUST WHAT IS Gandhi's purpose? Apparently he has abandoned dominion status as only a halfway house and has committed himself and his followers to absolute independence. On the other hand, the discretion given to the executive committee of the congress, a body of some 300 members, to adopt a program of passive resistance if, when, and as the committee thinks the moment opportune, seems to suggest that the attainment of independence is not looked for immediately, but is nevertheless to be held over the heads of the British government while further negotiations are carried on or preparations for action are being made. Not all of India's population of 320,000,000, of course, is behind Gandhi; most of the 70,000,000 Moslems have never recognized his leadership, the 3,000,000 Sikhs have yet to be conciliated, and the attitude of the 70,000,000 inhabitants of the native states is uncertain. The National Liberal Federation, representing moderate Indian opinion, is reported to have rejected the idea of independence and reasserted adherence to the program of dominion status. The thing most to be hoped for at the moment is that Great Britain may not feel compelled to send additional troops to India.

FRENCH POLITICS should be livelier than ever now that Léon Daudet, guiding genius of the *Action Française* and protagonist of a monarchy in place of the republic, has been pardoned and allowed to return from comfortable exile in Belgium. There was nothing to do but pardon him, of course, for the circumstances of his exile were ridiculous. Daudet bitterly attacked the Paris police about three years ago for alleged complicity in the death of his son, and for that was convicted of libel and sentenced to prison. The Santé prison is an ancient structure, but it had a telephone; so also had the Ministry of the Interior; and when, one day, somebody telephoned from the Ministry of the Interior, or from some place temporarily dubbed such, to say that Daudet was to be released, the obliging governor of the Santé opened the doors, bowed M. Daudet to a waiting automobile, and the whilom libellist sipped his aperatif that evening in Belgium. In that safe retreat he has continued to write his daily editorials for the *Action Française,* and the monarchist agitation has gone on in spite of a ban from Rome. Now a Tardieu Government (Tardieu the Poincarist and Clemencist, of all persons), backed by Edouard Herriot and political leaders of various stripes, has moved for a pardon and President Doumergue has graciously acquiesced.

> What you need is for me to have you in a two-by-four room. What wouldn't I do to you? I'd blacken your eyes and give you some real American spirit and do for you what your parents should have done. . . . In your diseased mind do you think the United States and communism are in any way alike? . . . We spend billions in this country for schools and what have we educated here—a mongrel and a moron who tries to go out and defy the American people.
>
> It would be a grand thing for me to send you back to Poland. It is too bad this government has so much red tape, that makes it hard to get rid of people like you. . . . The sentence that I am going to give you is not the one I had in mind. I am not going to sentence you to jail.

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That would make a martyr of you. Get out of this court room. You are not fit to be here.

THESE were the hysterical outpourings, as reported in the New York press, of Magistrate Silvester Sabbatino as he sat in his court in Brooklyn to pass judgment upon David Weiss, seventeen, confessed Communist, arrested for collecting funds for the strikers of Gastonia, North Carolina, and charged with vagrancy. The irrelevance of these remarks is exceeded only by their stupidity. The campaign of the American Civil Liberties Union to have the magistrate removed from the bench deserves to succeed. Incidentally, if Mr. Sabbatino and his like are really interested in winning over to American ideals impressionable young men like David Weiss who have accepted the easy and spectacular simplifications of communism, they should adopt other tactics.

AN INDIGNANT READER of the London *Nation and Athenaeum* is profoundly hurt that the Encyclopaedia Britannica employed the vice-president of a great American motor combination to write its article on the modern motor industry. The article declares that "America has admittedly taken the lead in this industry," a statement which further rouses the ire of the protestant. He lists a number of achievements in the development of the motor car in which England has led. First of all he points out that "the car which any unbiased American will own is the best car in the world is a car made in this country." More than that, he says, the first six-cylinder car was produced in Great Britain, the first free-wheel device was put into practical use on British soil, and British manufacturers were the first to adopt "dipping head lamps, non-splinterable glass, all-weather bodies, and sunshine saloons"—we hope that the latter term, with which we confess our unfamiliarity, has nothing to do with the question of alcoholic drinks! Finally, this aroused Englishman declares that his country has led in adoption of the front-wheel drive and in the use of the medium-pressure tire, which was evolved in England, and he hopes that these facts will show the difference "between taking the lead in number of cars sold and taking the lead in motor engineering." We are inclined to think that there is a good deal to be said on his side.

SIX THOUSAND ITALIAN PRISONERS were freed as a gesture in the general program of rejoicing over the marriage of the Italian Crown Prince and Princess Marie José of Belgium. This strikes us as an excellent idea and we have a proposal to make with regard to it. Let Allan Hoover, younger son of President Hoover, announce his approaching marriage (we are even willing to let him choose the fortunate young lady); and then, just to show how happy everybody is or ought to be, let Tom Mooney, Warren K. Billings, all the Centralia prisoners, the young California Communists who had the children at a summer camp make a red flag, the young Communists in Ohio who passed pamphlets at a meeting—let all these and any other political prisoners we have not mentioned be sent home by President or Governor with a pardon in their pocket. That would be as pretty a gesture as one could make. In addition we should recommend that the bride be dressed in white velvet and ermine and the groom in a dashing military uniform; that a large military escort in full-dress uniform on horseback ride fore and aft in the procession; that bands play on the route from the bride's home to the church; that flowers be cast at all concerned. In short, that we have a celebration that is a celebration. None of these quiet democratic weddings for us, with a young woman in a tweed jacket married to a young man in a blue serge suit. We want action, noise, color, splendor. And in such a setting what could be more fitting than a little princely generosity toward the unfortunates who, for their opinions, languish in our jails?

WE APPLAUD the brave words of President Frank Parker Day, of Union College, denouncing the commercialization of college sports, the employment of highly paid professional coaches, and all the other well-known athletic abuses of our institutions of higher learning. But such brave words are fairly cheap, even when they are spoken to the men who themselves run college athletics, so we applaud even more highly President Day's specific suggestions for correcting the evils he denounces. Rightly enough, he blames college executives as being largely responsible for these abuses, and he suggests the formation of a league of small colleges, beginning with Hamilton, Rensselaer Polytechnic, Amherst, Williams, Wesleyan, and Union, which shall agree to do away with gate receipts, professional coaches, and all compensation of any kind to athletes. That sounds like business, and we stand ready to applaud most heartily any such program if instituted by the colleges mentioned, or, failing that, by President Day and his associates at Union acting by and for themselves. President Lowell of Harvard has also made the compromise suggestion that only one intercollegiate game be held in each sport annually. These are beginnings; we hope they will shortly be translated into action.

ONE OF THE GREATEST of American teachers and critics, George Woodberry died in his seventy-fifth year on January 2. Professor Woodberry was for long years one of *The Nation's* most valued critics and reviewers and for a time a member of its staff, and this journal cannot but record now, in advance of a longer appreciation, its deep and sincere regret at this loss to American letters. Heir to the New England tradition, a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1877, for several years under the direct personal influence of James Russell Lowell, Mr. Woodberry early became a contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly, The Nation,* and similar publications, and was among the first scholars to take up the teaching of comparative literature, holding for five years a chair in that subject at Columbia. Inspired as he was, students came to him for a spiritual refreshment and quickening all too rare in this day and generation, and when he was virtually forced out of Columbia by the refusal of the authorities adequately to maintain his department and to overlook the inability of a man of near-genius to do routine committee and administrative work, a mighty protest arose from the students. But in vain. Scholars of this type were not congenial to the Butler regime at Columbia—Edward MacDowell went when Woodberry did, and Joel Spingarn followed in later years. But Mr. Woodberry never lacked adequate recognition for the long list of his published works, and among other honors was the rare one of being chosen Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. Fortunate is a country to whom is vouchsafed so great a teacher and scholar!

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The League of Nations

THAT the League of Nations has grown and developed since its foundation none can deny. Its supporters can point, like Felix Morley elsewhere in this issue of *The Nation,* to fundamental changes in the mechanism of the League, to a new emphasis in its policies, to a certain detachment from the spirit in which it was founded, and to a marked tendency to free itself from the domination of the "Big Five" nations which completely controlled it in 1919. Then it was that Professor Gilbert Murray declared truthfully that the League "does not put the world at the mercy of the Big Five; it is there already." "Without the League," he added, "the Big Five would be so many robber chieftains." Lord Robert Cecil, its great protagonist, was at the same time for excluding "definitely untrustworthy and hostile states, e.g., Russia, should the Bolshevist government remain in power." "Otherwise," he opined, "it is desirable not to be too rigid in scrutinizing qualifications, since the small Powers will in any case not exercise any considerable influence"! Let us then admit that the League has gone far beyond that amazing conception of one who still poses as a statesman and humanist. We are willing also to concede that the constitutional evolution of which Mr. Morley speaks has gone in the right direction, in part because of Europe's evolution out of the period of war liquidation; in part because of events in Europe outside the League, and often in spite of it. The Locarno treaties; the economic settlements; the Kellogg pact; the removal of the troops from the Rhineland —the credit for all these goes not to the League but to outsiders, to statesmen of the caliber of Briand, Stresemann, and MacDonald, who stepped in to pacify Europe at the time when the League was nearest collapse. But we must also record thankfully the dramatic incident of December 15, 1928, when the Council of the League, supporting Germany against the Poles, for the first time put one of the war victors in the wrong. There was progress, there at least the promise of genuine justice and a final breach with the conception of the League as an instrument of the victors to enforce their will upon the vanquished.

But it is in the development of the various technical bureaus of the League that one finds the greatest satisfaction —in the battle against opium and the white slave traffic; in the great progress of the International Labor Office toward handling the common problems of the working classes everywhere as a world entity; in the direct discussion of numerous problems such as agriculture, instead, as Mr. Morley points out, of requiring them to go through the circumlocution offices which handle the nations' foreign affairs. There lies the real gain for humanity; there the chief possibility of a solution of international ills at a table face to face, by men ruled by other considerations than politics; there the true inception of an eventual parliament of mankind of which the ages have dreamed. Beyond doubt the creation of this clearing house for discussion and adjustment and reform has been a great step forward for the world.

But when all this has been freely admitted, when praise has been given as all lovers of humanity must give it where and when it is due, there remains the other side. That still prevents us from joining those who all over the United States will be seizing upon the tenth anniversary of the League to urge anew the entrance of the United States into its membership. For the League is still part and parcel of that body of death, the Treaty of Versailles, which still prevents the final pacification of Europe; which keeps alive a dozen sore spots that threaten another catastrophe. The League has permitted the increase of the armed forces of Europe to a point where there are at least a million more men under arms in Europe than the day the World War started; it has been silent and complaisant in the face of such monstrous wrongs as the crucifixion of the entire people of the lower Tyrol; it has been unable to find its voice when the Treaty of Versailles, of which it is at once the child and the guardian, has been openly and flagrantly violated. Indeed, it has itself violated the treaty while strictly enforcing the worst provisions against the beaten or violated peoples. On these and other counts, the League is and has been "a magnificent conspiracy against justice," keeping alive the spirit of war.

It is in this very matter of peace that we must indict it most directly and most searchingly. It was the League that abdicated its functions and turned over its task to a non-legal body, the Council of Ambassadors, when Mussolini shot up the island of Corfu. It was the League that sat silent when the Poles stole Vilna which they have ever since kept. It was the League that, in its cowardice, kept silence when the French, violating the treaty, entered the Ruhr to enslave, to torture, to debase, to murder a people whom the League itself had helped to disarm. It was the League that shut its eyes to chicanery, deceit, and fraud on the eastern German frontier. It is the League that has achieved not one step toward the real disarmament to which it and the treaty are pledged, and has ignored and scorned the only true and honest proposal for that disarmament yet presented in Geneva—that of the Russians voiced by Litvinov—the Russians to whom the League still refuses fellowship.

The United States enter this League? Some time in the distant future perhaps but not now. We are utterly opposed to our country's becoming a party to the iniquities of the Treaty of Versailles which this country refused to sign, which we shall be bound to uphold, to sanctify, and to enforce if we join. We are well aware of the stock argument that it took the United States eight years to grow out of the loose and weak Confederation into a true and effective union of States. The parallel is not to the point for the Confederation was not charged with preserving the peace of the world, was not solemnly pledged to the abolition of that system of brute force which came so close in 1914-1918 to the destruction of civilization. The League was and is so pledged. It has been recreant to its trust while advocates have praised it to the skies and covered reams of good paper with adulation over its gradual acquisition of the strength to keep its solemn pledges to do what is right. And the horrible thing about it has been that while it hid its head in the sand the military forces of evil have grown and not lessened; that the world is hourly menaced by the threat of a new warfare of the nations to make the horrors of 1914-1918 seem child's play.

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New York's Power

THERE is beautiful fighting all along the line in the water-power battle, but nowhere prettier than in the State of New York. Ever since Alfred E. Smith, with his unerring instinct for the popular well-being, succeeded in dragging the matter into the open, the issue has been growing clearer and clearer. In the exigencies of party politics, a Republican majority in the legislature, its back to the wall, has been standing doggedly for the interests of the power companies, insisting that there should be no development of the State's water resources except on terms that give the companies the lion's share of the benefit; a Democratic governor with tenacity and apparently growing clearness of insight has been standing more or less definitely for the interests of the industries and the domestic consumers of electricity who want current supplied as cheaply as possible. New York, a highly industrialized State with an extensive agricultural territory and population, controls the great St. Lawrence power. If New York can solve its power problem along right lines, the other States will profit by its experience. The longer such a solution can be delayed, the farther may the power companies carry the pleasant process of skimming the cream off our electrical development.

Following in the path marked by his great predecessor, Governor Roosevelt in a special message last year urged the retention and operation of the proposed power plant by the State, with distribution by private companies under contract. This year he goes farther. After reasserting that "the ownership, development, and operation of the St. Lawrence power resources" should "remain forever in the actual possession of the people of the State or of an agency created by them," he goes on thus:

> At the same time I thought it advisable that the State agency should at least provide the financing of and retain the fee to any system of State-wide transmission of electricity made necessary by the new power development. As a mere matter of saving in interest rates alone this would reduce the cost of electricity many millions of dollars each year, for the consumer, of course, pays the interest and dividend charges on the project.

The Governor, it will be recalled, has proposed a board of trustees, a separate corporate entity like the New York Port Authority, with power to issue to private investors securities based on the structures to be built. The board of trustees will make contracts with private companies for the actual distribution of current at rates to be fixed in the contracts. Whether the transmission lines are to be leased to such companies is not clear from the Governor's plan. If what he proposes is that the State shall own and operate both generating plant and transmission lines, there will be left to private companies the local distribution of current at prices to be fixed by contract with the board. Under present legislation there is little possibility of municipalities going extensively into the business of distributing current. Local distribution, with all its extensive possibilities of economy, will then perforce remain for the most part in private hands.

The weakness of such a system (and it is a serious one) lies in the absence of any threat of effective public competition with the private companies in distribution. Lacking such a club the trustees may well have difficulty in bringing about economies of distribution and in exercising effective rate control. The plan does promise, however, the benefits of inexpensive public financing and unified operation of the generating and transmission system, and it perhaps represents as long a step as it is possible at this time to take in New York in the direction of outright public production and distribution of light and power. Of course, the power companies insist that the plan is not practical and that private capital cannot be induced to take over the task of local distribution under such conditions. If this be true, they are simply saying that private capital cannot be induced to distribute electricity under conditions that give any promise of safeguarding the public interest. We venture the guess, however, that the opposition of the companies is due to their fear not that the plan will fail but that it will succeed.

The striking feature of the New York situation, and in our judgment the promising one, lies in the frank recognition of the failure of public regulation of the private power industry. A quarter of a century ago people were looking hopefully to the movement for regulatory commissions of various kinds. As far as the power industry goes, the failure of that movement is confessed by everybody except the power companies, who have discovered astonishing virtues in public regulation since they learned how to control it. The history of the past two decades has made one thing abundantly clear: in the development of electric power there is no effective way of safeguarding the public interest except for the organized community to keep in its own hands the ownership and operation of the basic generating and transmission system, letting private enterprise come in, if at all, only in a minor capacity under conditions of strictest control by a public authority which actually has the whip hand. That is what the power companies are trying to prevent in New York and everywhere else.

The Talkies' Future

THE immediate and overwhelming popularity of the talkies gives evidence of the fact that they have come to stay. Not only have the most important producers ceased to make anything else, but the "wiring" of even the village nickelodeons has gone on so rapidly that the silent movie house is already almost a thing of the past. The wave of public protest predicted by certain critics never showed the slightest sign of materializing, and audiences, instead of troubling themselves about the alleged threat to an independent art form, accepted dialogue as an obvious addition to their favorite entertainment. Probably only America could have released so rapidly the capital and energy necessary to revolutionize an industry overnight, but that revolution is already a *fait accompli.*

Nor can it be denied that the technical development of the talkies has been almost as rapid as their spread. Voices sound far more human than they did six months ago and a method of story telling, half way between that of the stage and that of the screen, has been developed so successfully that it is possible to maintain with some show of reason that a film like that of George Arliss in "Disraeli" is better than the original production of the play from which it is taken.

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Yet despite these facts there is not, at present, the slightest reason for supposing that the talkie is destined to rise above the artistic level of its silent progenitor. The best dialogue pictures yet seen are not in any significant respect superior to the best of the old-style films, and the pity of it is that, whatever the theoretical possibilities of the new device may be, they do not seem any more likely to be realized than those possibilities which enthusiasts have been, for ten years past, vainly discussing in connection with the traditional cinema. The word "movie" remains synonymous with all that is cheap and vulgar, not because cheapness and vulgarity are obviously inherent in the medium, but because the moving picture was developed under certain definite limiting conditions; and the prospects are that the talkie, developing under the same conditions, will continue as it has begun—that it will be merely a movie made more ghastly because it has learned to say in words the nonsense which it formerly could only imply in pantomime.

If there were any way of rescuing it from the already established tradition of the film, then the hopes expressed for it might possibly be justified, but the movie was stultified by mass production and censorship and it is not easy to see how the new-style films can fail to feel the full force of these destructive influences. They passed almost automatically into the control of the same censoring bodies, official and unofficial, which had already been accepted by the magnates of the cinema, and the very fact that they could appeal to the population at large made it inevitable that the whole effort of the producers should be, as it had been in the past, to hit the largest common denominator of a vast public. It is obvious that the censorship has succeeded only in removing from the films every trace of intelligence, while it has left them dripping with every variety of implied sensuality. It is equally obvious that the effort to construct stories of universal appeal has resulted only in the mechanical repetition of the most elementary fables. But the movies have paid too well for the industry to wish to try any other method, and the censorship has proved so little harmful to the box office that there is not the slightest likelihood of any effectual protest against it. The talkies are made by the same people, with the same aims, and for the same public, as the movies. How can they possibly be other than what the movies have always been?

Much talk is heard again of "intimate" theaters and of films made for special audiences, but though similar proposals were made in connection with the silent movies, and several "art" theaters were established in New York and elsewhere, they were compelled to depend almost exclusively upon foreign films. Production is far too expensive to be undertaken without the prospect of a very large audience, and unfortunately the talkies, being even more costly than the silent films, are even less likely to be produced for any except the largest public. The very fact that they can be so easily transported and shown simultaneously in a hundred places turns out to be a curse which makes any production not intended for a hundred places almost unthinkable.

Under the circumstances all discussion of the purely theoretical possibilities of the new medium is futile until some method is devised for rescuing it from those who invented and exploited it. Yet so many are contented with what it is that it is not easy to see how it can be made into what it well might be.

"Hey, Skin-nay!"

CLARE BRIGGS was just a grown-up small boy and, to an America made up of small boys of all ages, one of the most appealing cartoonists in our national history. We do not really take politics seriously; the town swimming-hole and the small boy's houn'-dog and the pettinesses of home life and the sorrows of kelly pool and golf loom larger on the national horizon. Briggs was their artist laureate.

And it was a pretty good small boy's America that Clare Briggs pictured. Perhaps it was not an entirely true, or a truly entire, America, for it had so little meanness or malice in it. One reason that Briggs could not do political cartoons was that politics almost requires a little meanness and malice, and Briggs did not have them in him. Perhaps the Reedsburg, Wisconsin, in which he lived until he was nine, or the Dixon, Illinois, where he lived his next five years, or even the Lincoln, Nebraska, of Briggs's pre-Bryan years, had less meanness in them than the cities of today. At any rate, they provided Briggs with the material for his immortal series, "When a Feller Needs a Friend" and "The Days of Real Sport"; and similar small towns and small-town graduates built up the vast newspaper audiences that looked for Briggs first, even before they turned to the sporting pages.

It may be nonsense to say, as some do, that the comic strips are the authentic art of present-day America. But it is certainly true that they are an authentic expression of America today; when newspapers by the hundreds subscribe to a strip or a series it is because their canny editors know that the artist-author touches the hearts of his readers. The social historian could find much to ponder in Briggs and his success. His picture of the golf fan, all dressed up in plaid knickerbockers and tasseled stockings, who got up early to get a good start at the country club, and tried to be unconscious of the stares and remarks of the husky laborers who crowded into the same street car, has material in it for an essay on America—its democracy and its standardization both. The infinite series "Mr. and Mrs." might provide material for a dozen volumes on Marriage in America, on Life in the Suburbs, on the American Home. And they would be all the richer material because Briggs almost never consciously preached a moral or tried to drive a lesson home. He just looked about him, amused, and recorded upon his pad the ridiculous pettinesses he saw.

In his amusement there was always a certain zestful sympathy. "The Male Quartette," absurd as it was, was a dramatization of Briggs's own life. He adored singing, and had a marvelous repertory, not all recorded in print. He drew kelly-pool pictures when he was playing kelly pool for enthusiastic hours every day; he drew golf cartoons after he turned to golf. One large reason for his success was that perpetual fountain of small-boy enthusiasm for life that was his. It was never forced; it welled up in the man; and it stamped his brand of humor. Not in all Briggs's work can one find the cheap snicker which so often makes the comic strip a synonym for vulgarity.

We shall miss him; he was the great comic artist of small-town America, and the machine age has not yet produced his peer.

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It Seems to Heywood Broun

THERE is nothing essentially childish in communism. Individuals of high intelligence have been the adherents of its cause. Grant the original premises on which this economic philosophy is based, and the rest follows logically enough. Nor is there any sound reason why American communities should grow excited and pass all sorts of silly and savage laws to check communism. To be sure, the Communist frankly admits his desire to overthrow the existing governmental and economic structure by force, but what of that? Nobody can legislate the right of revolution out of existence. When your revolutionist is strong enough to effect his coup he will hardly be restrained because of some statute in a book. And when he isn't strong enough why bother with him?

I shall be told by some that if no check is put upon Communist propagandists the cause may gain sufficient converts to become a realistic menace in this country. People who say this have not heard Communist speeches. But though the party has been cursed with many dreadfully dull leaders it has not lacked men and women of dignity and sincerity. Accordingly, I wonder just what they have been doing during several recent Communist jamborees. I am no red baiter but I feel that the Communists themselves should purge their ranks of shrill and trivial recruits.

It has always been my contention that the left wing's reliance on force made it an inevitable and natural ally of American militarism. All who put their trust in guns and bullets are brothers under the skin. Striking proof of this was furnished just the other day in Washington when twenty-eight boys and girls calling themselves members of the Young Communist Party staged a hostile demonstration in front of the Mexican Embassy. Among the banners which they carried was one inscribed "Down with Ortiz Rubio, President-elect of Mexico." And, curiously enough, someone else in that same procession carried a placard with the slogan, "Down with American imperialism."

Here, surely, there was some lack of team work because these rattle-headed radicals were distinctly playing the game of American jingoes. Patrioteers who declare that the stars and stripes should float over every foot of territory from the Rio Grande to the Panama Canal could well afford to hire such muddle-minded revolutionists to demonstrate in the same manner every afternoon. Only by vigilance can peace with Mexico be preserved. Many powerful public leaders are patiently waiting for some incident sufficient to raise a conflagration which will permit them to sweep the American public into a receptive mood for a Mexican invasion. And if war came and our forces penetrated deeply enough into Mexican territory you may depend upon it that the United States would be hopelessly embarked upon a great and tragic imperialistic venture. Isn't it enough that we already have a Haiti on our conscience?

To be sure, the young Communists did carry a banner in which they attempted to explain their demonstration upon the grounds of class consciousness. "Ortiz Rubio is the murderer of workers and peasants in Mexico" was the slogan which they displayed. Waiving any argument as to the justice of this assertion, I might point out to the adolescent Communists that precisely the same thing was charged by our jingoes against Huerta when the disgraceful Vera Cruz adventure was launched by Woodrow Wilson. A general conflict was averted at that time only by a narrow squeak and it became evident as soon as our forces landed that in the face of foreign invasion left- and right-wing Mexicans immediately came together to make cause against the alien. It would be utterly ironic if some such demonstration against the ambassador of a friendly nation as the chuckle-headed Communists launched in Washington should become the exciting incident of an imperialistic war. And such a possibility is not utterly fantastic. Riots against the representatives of foreign governments have always been grave symptoms of impending conflict. Excited nationals are very fond of venting their patriotism upon some isolated group of aliens.

If there had been a scuffle and some one attached to the legation had been hurt the consequences might have been serious indeed. Out of just such thoughtless escapades arise questions of national honor which press peace treaties to the breaking-point. I do not make the charge that this particular set of reds was actually inspired by native jingoes. Just for the mere devilment of it they played the game of one of the most dangerous factions which exists in America. And already they have succeeded in adding some little fuel to the woodpile of misunderstanding and distrust which looms up between the United States and Mexico. No red flag belonged in this procession but the saffron banner of jingoistic, yellow journalism.

Less reprehensible but just as silly are many other Communist college pranks. I think it is ridiculous for a nation to believe that it can legislate the right of revolution out of existence, but if you strike at a king you must kill him. I wonder just what the Young Communists believe is gained by various wrist-slapping tactics. How is the Utopia of which they dream advanced by a single day when left-wing hecklers succeed in breaking up a Socialist meeting? Can't the Communists leave this to the American Legion? I'm afraid that the average American Communist sees this revolution, so freely prated of, as a sort of second-act curtain in a musical comedy with red sashes and barricades.

With no particular good-will I give the American Communist Party a little good advice. It has made the fatal error of becoming comic, and most of the opposition against repressive red-baiting laws comes from men and women who feel that it is silly to level blunderbusses at butterflies. Here and there, as in Gastonia, Communist organizers have done hard, dangerous, and necessary missionary work. But for the most part American communism is out of Greenwich Village by Gordon Gin. The movement has little chance to grow because it has become just about as exclusive as the Union Club. For instance, the latest test for membership in the militant proletariat is exceedingly hard to pass. It may even limit the party to a total of one. As I understand the latest by-law of the party, as expounded in the *New Masses*, no one can be a good Communist unless he likes the plays of Michael Gold.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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My Brother's Peeper

By GARDNER JACKSON

Boston, January 2

THE methods of the New England Watch and Ward Society and, incidentally, the workings of that peculiar mechanism, the mind of the censor, have been suddenly thrust into the limelight. The glare of publicity has been revealing, if not complimentary. Felix, the Greek newsdealer who sold a copy of the *American Mercury* containing the story, Hatrack, a few years ago, was poor and without prestige. In the latest instance, the society was unlucky enough to catch in one of its numerous traps a bookseller who had sufficient influence to enlist noted counsel, a scholarly clientele, and a press campaign in his defense.

The Watch and Ward Society sent an agent some months ago to the Dunster House Bookshop in Cambridge to buy a copy of D. H. Lawrence's novel, "Lady Chatterly's Lover." The society knew that James A. DeLacey, the manager, had already sold five of the "obscene" books. The fact that three of the five had been sold to members of the Harvard faculty, one to "a prominent lawyer," and one to a book collector did not deter the society's directors. Temptation must be removed wherever it exists. The agent, John Tait Slaymaker, experienced representative of the society, approached DeLacey and his clerk, Joseph Sullivan. He said his name was "John Tait." This was no error of dishonesty but merely one of omission, according to Charles S. Bodwell, executive secretary of the society, who explained that Slaymaker's name had recently appeared in the news and "it would have been announcing himself an agent of the society to have used it in securing evidence." Slaymaker also said that he was an agent of the Automobile Legal Association. DeLacey and Sullivan told Slaymaker that they did not keep Lawrence's book in stock and had none at hand. Slaymaker was persistent and persuasive, and suggested that there might be ways of getting one. He returned another day and chance produced a second-hand copy from a Harvard student which DeLacey sold to him without profit.

After trial in the District Court of East Cambridge before Judge Arthur P. Stone, DeLacey was sentenced to pay a fine of $800 and spend four months in the House of Correction; Sullivan drew a $200 fine and two weeks in the House of Correction. The case was appealed to the Superior Court of Middlesex County. DeLacey waived jury trial and appeared before Judge Frederick W. Fosdick, with District Attorney Robert T. Bushnell prosecuting. Judge Fosdick found DeLacey guilty and sentenced him to pay a fine of $500 and spend one month in the House of Correction. The case of Sullivan, the clerk, was placed on file. DeLacey has appealed to the Supreme Court on technical exceptions. During the trial in the District Court Richard C. Evarts, well-known Harvard graduate, son of the Reverend Prescott Evarts, was subjected to a bitter tongue-lashing and was threatened with the charge of contempt of court by Judge Stone because he (Evarts) questioned the methods used by the Watch and Ward to procure the evidence.

The sentence in the District Court aroused the Harvard elements of Boston and Cambridge to an even greater extent than the banning of "Strange Interlude." It was the common tea-table and dinner talk in all Boston intellectual circles. The Boston *Herald,* in a vigorous editorial, dissected the Watch and Ward Society and its methods, pointing out incidentally that a number of former agents of the society had been convicted of crime. The board of directors of the society struck back with a letter to the *Herald* charging unfairness. It was signed by the Reverend Raymond Calkins, president, Godfrey L. Cabot, treasurer, Dr. Mark W. Richardson, Sumner Clement, Grosvenor Calkins, and Bernard J. Rothwell, former president of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, directors. These gentlemen complained at the prominence given to the fact that the criminals referred to were once agents for the society. The editor of the *Herald* replied by again listing some of the former agents by name. "One of them, Joseph Farrell, a degenerate of the worst type, is now serving a thirty-year sentence." The campaign of the *Herald* and the *Transcript* whetted general as well as Harvard interest. (The *Post* alone upheld the censors' position.) Sympathetic Harvard students (who form a large part of the Dunster House Bookshop's clientele) started a subscription fund to pay DeLacey's fine and help him along during his incarceration.

When the case came up on appeal in the Superior Court, the courtroom was crowded. Mr. Evarts, more at home with pen than with tongue, had associated with him as defense counsel Herbert Parker, white-haired and elderly, former attorney general of the State. Mr. Parker elicited all the sordid details from Slaymaker of the Watch and Ward and his active superior, Mr. Bodwell. Then he pointed his patrician finger at the Watch and Warders and called them "depraved and perverted procurers . . . deceivers . . . falsifiers." He was so vehement that the *Herald* subsequently felt called upon to justify his words.

Meanwhile the prosecutor, District Attorney Bushnell, young Harvard graduate who is loudly steaming ahead to higher political office on his record of convictions in Middlesex County, found himself in a difficult position. To preserve his reputation as a "killer"—a name bestowed upon him by reporters—he must answer the immaculately fervent Mr. Parker. But if he convicted the favorite bookseller of Harvard intellectuals on charges of obscenity, what would his classmates, some of whom were among those same intellectuals, think of him? Mr. Bushnell was clever. He straddled the issue, stole part of the limelight from Mr. Parker, and received at the moment the uncritical praise of everyone concerned. He did this by attacking the Watch and Ward Society himself—the society which had induced him to prosecute DeLacey. He pounded the jury rail and shouted:

> I want the public to understand that the district attorney does not indorse the Watch and Ward Society's policy or tactics. I serve warning here and now that as long as I am district attorney of this district and agents of this society go into a bookstore of good repute and induce and procure the commission of a crime, I will proceed against them for criminal conspiracy.

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Bravely spoken, cried the *Herald*. Bravely spoken, echoed those who had been thrilled by his words in the courtroom and in print. But then one or two reflective minds detected Mr. Bushnell's trick. Why not proceed against the society for criminal conspiracy in this case? Certainly it was as good a test case as any conscientious district attorney, holding the avowed sentiments of Mr. Bushnell, could possibly wish for.

Judge Fosdick, in finding DeLacey guilty, joined the chorus against the Watch and Ward. "I do think," said Judge Fosdick, "that the way in which the defendant was induced to sell the book calls for every part of the condemnation that has been placed on it by counsel for either side. . . . The Court entertains no cordiality for the society."

There was little or no discussion at the trial as to the meaning of obscenity and as to Lawrence's book in relation to that meaning. Defense counsel admitted that the book was obscene within the meaning of the Massachusetts statute. They did not object when the careering Mr. Bushnell labeled Lawrence "a filthy degenerate with a sewer brain." One wonders what these gentlemen of the bench and bar would say of Harvard faculty members and their wives who discuss the book as a serious attempt on the part of Lawrence to accomplish a significant and difficult task of writing. This faculty interest is hardly pornographic.

The drive on the society has continued with increasing vigor. The *Herald* epitomized the castigation from counsel, court, and prosecution, printed the list of officers and directors of the society, spoke of their prominence in the community, and suggested that "it is impossible these reprehensible methods have the indorsement of these gentlemen." The list includes, in addition to the names already mentioned: Bishop W. F. Anderson of the Methodist church, Rev. Daniel L. Marsh, president of Boston University, Rev. W. H. van Allen, Rev. Austin K. DeBlois, Rev. Endicott Peabody, Joseph Lee, and Arthur McArthur, all vice-presidents; Frank Chouteau Brown, Thomas Dudley Cabot, Francis J. Moors, Dr. David D. Scannell, and David Claghorn, directors. The blue blood of old New England is well represented in the list.

An amusing interlude was the resignation of Professor Julian Coolidge of Harvard from the society's board because, according to first newspaper reports, the Harvard boys are boycotting the particular Harkness house of which he is to be head next year. He later denied this, insisting that his resignation was prompted by mere press of duties connected with the new Harvard housing plan. And he showed a long waiting list of applicants for his house. But the later resignation of Bishop William Lawrence of the Episcopal church from his vice-presidency of the society could not be laughed away or concealed by silence. All the newspapers headlined his defection and gave as the reason his disapproval of the society's tactics. The bishop, however, has uttered not a word of denial or affirmation. In the face of this unprecedented attack some of the directors counter-attacked with a bitter arraignment of young Mr. Bushnell and DeLacey's defenders. They held long meetings behind locked doors with "nothing to say" afterward. At one of these conferences a lengthy defense of the society's conduct was prepared for private distribution, over the signatures of Messrs. Calkins and Bodwell, to the 500 or more contributors to the society. It was a pitiful plea. The society, it said, was "founded by such men as Edward Everett Hale and Phillips Brooks. Some of Boston's best citizens have been in its service. It has achieved an international reputation in its field. It is entitled to be treated with some respect." It attempted to justify the agent's tactics in the DeLacey case by insisting at length that detective methods are essential to uncover such evidence and that government detectives would get nowhere without using them.

But the society's directors soon had another, volunteer defender. E. Tallmadge Root, executive secretary of the Massachusetts Federation of Churches, resented, as did many others, "the abuse being heaped upon" the Watch and Warders. "One who scatters cholera germs," he declared, "is less of a menace to society than one who sells an impure book." The *Herald* replied that if Mr. Root is right, DeLacey ought to go to the electric chair. Mr. Root replied by saying that he advocated abolition of the death penalty, with quotations from Christ and St. Paul and with the assertion that the underlying question is: Is our civilization to be pagan or Christian?

Meanwhile the booksellers, the Massachusetts Library Club, and a committee of prominent citizens have a well-organized campaign for their bill which changes the present law governing books primarily by substituting for the words, "containing obscene language," the words, "which considered as a whole is obscene." The Dunster Bookshop furor will sharpen the issue when it comes before the legislature just now convening. The bill, sponsored by Representative Henry Shattuck, treasurer of Harvard, has a fair chance of passing the Senate but probably not the House. Even if it is enacted, it seems to me that it will make little difference. The state of mind in administering a law often counts more than the law, and the Dunster House case shows the dilemma. The Reverend Raymond Calkins is a supporter of the American Civil Liberties Union, Joseph Lee is a member of the advisory board and one of the chief bulwarks of the Civil Liberties Committee of Massachusetts, yet these two men are, respectively, president and vice-president of the Watch and Ward Society.

With obscenity to be had in two-bit, four-bit, and six-bit lots at several theaters and burlesque shows, as well as in countless dirty magazines on the newsstands—in fact, wherever one hunts it—Mr. Calkins devotes the energy of his society to procuring a sale of Lawrence's book by deception. And there are plenty of legislators on Beacon Hill, and on many another legislative hill in America, who think he's right.

It must be frightfully uncomfortable to be "an expert" in obscenity—Mr. Bodwell told an interviewer that it takes "an expert to find the dirt in 'The Well of Loneliness.'" For relief from contemplation of this anguish of the Watch and Warders one turns with joy to the censor bill written by Eliot H. Paul and filed recently on Beacon Hill by Senator Henry Parkman, Jr. The first section of that bill reads as follows:

> Any person acting as censor of either books, plays, pictures, music, or dancing, for the commonwealth or any county, city, or town thereof, shall first pass a civil-service examination including the standard Binet intelligence test for mentality of eighteen years, general information and language test similar to those required for employees of the Boston Public Library, and shall submit to the State department of public health satisfactory evidence of normal sex experience.

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Lame-Duck Diplomats

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, January 4

IF there was one concession that Herbert Hoover's critics were willing to make when he entered the White House, it was that he undoubtedly would seek to improve the quality of the country's foreign diplomatic service. He was no callow New England provincial, but a traveler who knew the world and its variegated politics, and was fully aware of the enormous disadvantages which the United States suffers from being officially represented abroad by men who speak but one language and speak it none too well. Having personally observed the ineptness or downright ignorance of these dressed-up bankers, brokers, pork packers, and publishers, it was natural to suppose that Mr. Hoover would replace them with emissaries having some knowledge of the history, language, policies, and problems of the respective countries to which they were accredited. Exactly the reverse has happened. We may pass over his selection of that 200 per cent patrioteering poseur, Charles G. Dawes, for the London post, although on at least one occasion the State Department has been seriously embarrassed by "Hell-and-Maria's" plain incompetence in reporting the facts of the British government's position on naval limitation. But what occurred when it was necessary to fill the position of second importance, that of Ambassador to France? Senator Walter E. Edge of New Jersey, a typical Babbitt, distinguished from other Old Guardsmen by his incoherence and the fogginess of his mental processes, was facing a stiff if not entirely hopeless fight for reelection. What did it matter that upon the attitude of the French government might depend the success or failure of the arms conference to which Mr. Hoover was hopefully looking forward? Senator Edge had been a faithful party henchman, he was very wealthy (from newspaper advertising), and his young wife had strong social inclinations. So off he went to Paris—and a few days ago all Washington chuckled when press dispatches reported that the Ambassador "sees nothing discouraging" in the French attitude toward the London conference. The word "discouraging" probably might have been omitted without any loss of accuracy.

* * * * *

BUT worse was yet to come. A few days ago the capital and the country were astounded by the announcement that Senator Sackett of Kentucky would be made Ambassador to Germany. A report of this appointment had been current for days, but it was treated as a joke. An obscure back-bencher known only for his timid manner and his panicky straddling on nearly every question that had arisen during his five years in the Senate, Sackett had made no impression on legislation. He ranked well down among such senatorial nonentities as Keyes of New Hampshire, Shortridge of California, and Trammell of Florida. And yet there must have been some reason for designating him to represent the United States at a capital whose policies will furnish one of the principal answers to the problem of future peace in Europe. There was: the explanation lay in the political situation in Kentucky. The backbone of the Republican organization in that State consists of the mountaineer vote of the Eastern counties. Its leader is Governor Flem Sampson, a Kentucky Heflin locally celebrated as "Flim-Flam Flem." To him and his gaunt cohorts the millionaire Sackett has always been a "Louisville dude," whose frightened sponsorship of an alien exclusion amendment to the census bill was not sufficient to win their trust. They were all set to retire him this year in favor of Representative John M. Robsion, a fire-eating, fundamentalist statesman of their own tribe. Since Sackett had announced his candidacy, and since his millions plus command of the Louisville machine would enable him to put up a struggle that would disrupt the party and probably insure Democratic victory in this important border State, it seemed incumbent on the party leaders, especially such leaders as National Chairman Huston and Senator George Moses, to do something. The answer to the problem presented by the prejudices of the Kentucky poor whites was found, of all places, in Berlin. Mr. Hoover is the first of our Presidents to save politicians from impending lame duckery by making them ambassadors. Another triumph for efficiency!

* * * * *

CHAIRMAN ALEXANDER LEGGE of the Farm Board continues to follow his own sweet will, and grower-owned and grower-controlled organizations for the marketing of agricultural products spring up in the West and South like gigantic mushrooms, although the grain trade has been quick to recognize the unmistakable and sinister odor of the toadstool. It begins to look as if the "pink-slip boys" really are through, unless Providence or some influence more powerful than Julius Barnes intervenes. Piteous cries issue from Minneapolis, Chicago, Duluth, and Kansas City; paunchy gentlemen who contributed real money for the defeat of Al Smith and the hated McNary-Haugen plan wear a look of betrayal, and George Akerson's gloom must be attributed to something more than the White House fire. Legge is not merely adamant, he is as bellicose as a badger, and the backward States are still guffawing over his blunt suggestion to President Butterworth that the United States Chamber of Commerce divest itself of economic theories that belonged to the horse-and-buggy era. At a press conference someone asked Chairman Legge what would become of all the "pink-slip boys" if he carried out his program of eliminating speculation. The Chairman replied that it was not one of his problems, but he chuckled grimly when someone else remarked that they might have to go back to work. This rough diamond from Chicago impresses me as being just about the brightest gem in the Administration's crown.

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THE writer is sometimes accused of commenting in this place with undue severity on the professional courage and standards of his colleagues. It is true that to see newspaper men abasing themselves before such characters as Calvin Coolidge and Andrew Mellon, to see them presenting Jim Watson, John Tilson, and Bert Snell as statesmen,

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fills me with nausea. But it is often said in their defense that it is extremely difficult for a reporter to be any more honest than his newspaper. That is true. It requires no particular courage to write the truth for the Baltimore *Sun,* the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* or the Scripps-Howard papers. Such newspapers as these expect it. But what would happen to the correspondent who tried to write the truth about "Coolidge economy" for the Boston *Transcript,* or about the Mellon tax refunds for the Philadelphia *Public Ledger,* or about the social lobby for the Washington *Star?* What would happen to any man who insisted on dishing up the bald truth about any Republican administration for such papers as the New York *Herald Tribune,* the Detroit *Free Press,* the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat,* the Chicago *Tribune,* or the Los Angeles *Times?* The Washington corps of correspondents has its inevitable percentage of sycophants, climbers, politicians, and lads with an eye on the main chance, and it has, sad to relate, a solemn bevy of "gallery statesmen" who have been duped into a bogus sense of being "part of the Government," and hence bound to conceal its blunders and knaveries. But on the whole they are ten times better men than the owners of their papers. I present herewith my own Honor Roll of Washington correspondents for 1929:

JOHN A. KENNEDY and EDWARD L. RODDAN, of Universal Service, who dug up and printed the facts that led to public exposure of the Bingham-Eyanson tariff scandal.

PAUL R. MALLON and RAYMOND CLAPPER, of the United Press, who broke up secret executive sessions of the Senate on appointments, by publishing the secret roll call on the confirmation of ex-Senator Lenroot.

HAROLD BRAYMAN of the New York *Evening Post,* and PHELPS H. ADAMS, of the New York *Sun,* who discovered that the suspension of cruiser construction indicated in a White House statement last July actually never was ordered and did not occur.

M. FARMER MURPHY, of the Baltimore *Sun,* who investigated and wrote a remarkably illuminating series on conditions among the North Carolina mill workers, and capped it with a brilliantly ironical description of the reception by Senator Overman, first, of a party of sight-seeing plutocrats from that State, and immediately afterward, of a delegation of mill workers.

RUTH FINNEY, of the Scripps-Howard papers, whose reporting of the Boulder Dam legislation and the ensuing chicaneries ought to be emulated by several dozen of her masculine colleagues.

MARION L. RAMSAY, of Universal Service, who declined to join in the chorus of ecstatic ohs and ahs when the eminent Owen D. Young appeared before the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce, and proceeded to report the devastating truth about the Radio Corporation's claims as they were revealed in the subsequent cross-examinations.

DREW PEARSON, of the Baltimore *Sun,* who has startled the bureaucrats and shocked the poll-parrots by his realistic reporting of the conduct of our foreign relations.

ROBERT B. SMITH, of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger,* who despite poor health and a paper that is too stupid and reactionary to appreciate him, continues to exemplify for all of us the finest qualities of the true reporter—an insatiable zest for getting the truth, an incorruptible mind, a contempt for sham, a fluent style, and an irrepressible sense of humor under difficulties.

Ten Years of the League

By FELIX MORLEY

Geneva, December 3

THROUGHOUT the world plans are now being made for celebrating during January the tenth anniversary of the launching of the League of Nations. There will be banquets and speeches from Nanking to Cape Town. Russia will not be able to ignore the occasion and the United States will dine it with just as much enthusiasm as if Washington were the capital of a member state. Almost in spite of ourselves we are intrigued by the persistent vitality of an institution which President Harding years ago pronounced "dead."

Only one sizable city is likely to pass over the anniversary as a matter of course. That city is Geneva. Sir Eric Drummond, the thoughtful, tactful Secretary-General of the League, has always made it a positive policy to decry League self-advertisement. The laying of the cornerstone of the permanent buildings last September was an occasion of super-Jeffersonian simplicity. And Sir Eric will have his way again in January. "What's ten years in the life of the League?" he asks, and then with a Scotch twinkle, "I agree that when we get around to the hundredth anniversary we shall be justified in putting on a bit of a show." The evolution of the League has been so rapid that there is doubt as to the propriety of regarding the truly international institution of 1930 as the same organ which the victors in the World War created at Paris in 1919.

With the recession of the war and its problems into the background, the League is for the first time coming into its own. In the early days the greater part of its work was concentrated on such subjects as boundary disputes, plebiscites, prisoner repatriation, fiscal reconstruction in Central Europe, and other problems which were a direct heritage of the hostilities. But of late years the League has more and more turned its attention to problems of peace, though they are often none the less controversial. It concerns itself today with such questions as multilateral customs agreements looking toward a less hampered international trade, improvement in international transport and communications, examination of production problems affecting the economies of all countries, standardization of the purchasing power of gold, codification of international law, regulation of the traffic in dangerous drugs, international supervision of politically backward areas through the mandate system, and many other matters affecting the welfare of the world community. One of the best reasons for believing that this League, and no other, has come to stay is the increasing extent to which non-European states are calling upon it for vital work. It was to Geneva, not to the Pan-American Union, that the

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Bolivian government turned recently when it decided to reorganize its public-health service.

Side by side with the transformation in the character of the League's work a most interesting constitutional evolution has been in progress. Ten years is a short time to measure a development of this kind, but it is quite clear that changes have already come about which fundamentally alter the mechanism designed at Paris in 1919. The Secretariat is a much more expert, influential, and potent organ than anyone then thought it would be. Because its members are always on the job of organizing international cooperation they have developed not merely an international viewpoint, but, what is more significant, unsuspected powers and directive abilities which make it a strong force in international relations.

Pari passu has come an increase of the authority of the Secretary-General. This international official, who holds a life appointment and is subject to a regular accounting at the triannual Council and annual Assembly sessions, may in the future be much more in the public eye than at present. Sir Eric Drummond, the first and present "S. G.," is a retiring individual who exercises the greatest caution in utilizing the large theoretical powers within his grasp. Will Drummond's eventual successor, who by the politics of the present situation is likely to be a Frenchman, be equally diplomatic? It is a question of great importance, for the wrong kind of man in this potentially autocratic post could go far toward wrecking all the careful work of the past decade. Incidentally, the title of Secretary-General gives a very inaccurate idea of the large executive powers in the hands of that official. He would be much better described had the originally suggested title of chancellor been kept. We recall how much authority a medieval chancellor could acquire in the reign of a weak king. The League Council, composed of busy men with widely varying viewpoints on many problems, is, as a composite, the inevitably weak king to the chancellor of the League.

The growing authority of the Secretariat illustrates one of the substantial difficulties in the present relationship between the United States and the League. As everyone knows, official cooperation between Washington and Geneva has been steadily increasing, though the formality of keeping our legation at Berne as intermediary is still observed. We are now represented, either officially or quasi-officially, on a good half of the threescore international committees and commissions engaged under League auspices in studies of more than transient importance. But among the 700 members of the League Secretariat, the different sections of which serve as planning and strategy boards for the appropriate international commissions which meet at Geneva periodically, there are only a half-dozen Americans, and these with no official standing whatsoever. While the United States is generally in a position, then, to block League policies which it does not like, it is handicapped in initiating plans for international cooperative action which it favors. To take a concrete case, the American representative on the Economic Committee can there point out that it is useless to expect our cooperation in a world program for lowering tariffs on aluminum, but he cannot tell that body in what specific respect it may expect American cooperation. Our present negative intimacy with the League seems to spring from the tendency of the Administration to associate itself ever more closely with all the technical work at Geneva, while Congress as a whole remains in the most profound ignorance of what the League is doing. The anomalous situation created is one which can scarcely continue indefinitely.

Yet it is probably due partially to the almost surreptitious nature of American participation that the beginnings of a change of very great importance are now apparent in the League's technique. This change is coming in the theory of international administration, a theory which was really born with the various interallied control commissions which had to be set up to win the war.

Before the war, as Sir Arthur Salter has pointed out, such international administration as existed had to be initiated through the clumsy and inexpert method of foreign-office collaboration. If some problem arose affecting the mutual agricultural interests of X, Y, and Z, it could be solved only by treaties laboriously concluded between X and Y, X and Z, and Y and Z, treaties in which the technical agricultural needs of all three countries were sure to be subordinated to diplomatic considerations. From the outset the League has tried to substitute a more scientific method, by bringing together on its various technical commissions men who could speak not merely for their governments, but more particularly for specialized interests with the care of which their governments are charged. Thus, officials from the ministries of agriculture of X, Y, and Z confer with colleagues from a score of other countries in a League commission at Geneva. If the subject at issue is susceptible of settlement, this direct relationship between the appropriate government officials will point a way to much more fruitful collaboration than when contacts were limited to the foreign offices.

International cooperation, at first carried on through the medium of a single government department in each country—the state department or foreign office—has through the agency of the League developed into a whole network of contacts between most of the government departments of the participating nations. In the development of the science of politics this is obviously a step of great importance, and its perfection has been one of the most notable achievements of the League's first decade. Only the traditions of the past—the idea that the public are more interested in conversations between the French and German foreign ministers at Geneva than they are in the more basic negotiations between the French and German ministers of commerce and industry—have prevented the extent of the development from being generally realized. But even those Americans who have appreciated the possibilities of the new theory of international administration have found themselves baffled as to how the United States could best play its part therein. There is not merely the artificial obstacle caused by the fact that our departmental officials and experts cannot frequently be appointed to membership on League commissions as long as we try to maintain the fiction that the organization is primarily a European affair. There is the deeper difficulty that both the tradition and the technique of American government are largely opposed to such an enforcement of bureaucratic power. The popularity of state socialism in Europe is something alien to most American minds. And it has not escaped unnoticed that the original League technique was something which would develop international bureaucratic cooperation —superimpose a sort of interstate socialism upon the state socialism of the past.

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Therefore, it was not only the least provocative way, but also the natural American way, to have most of our first appointments to League commissions those of private citizens, who acted, however, with tacit government approval. The American representative on the League Economic Committee, for instance, is not a representative of the Department of Commerce, though most of his colleagues are officials of the analogous departments in their own governments. On the contrary, he is an active business man, a former president of the Merchants' Association of New York, an ideal spokesman for thousands of his fellows in large-scale commercial affairs. As is the case with Lucius Eastman, so also with Jeremiah Smith, American representative on the League's Financial Committee. Mr. Smith has no official connection with the Treasury Department, but he is for that reason none the less able to present the attitude of American finance on international problems.

In other words, our active participants in League work are to a large extent functional rather than governmental spokesmen. And it is a matter of great interest to close students of the League that this policy, adopted quite naturally by the United States, is now being followed to an increasing extent by other countries. Along with their bureaucrats they are also sending leading technicians, industrialists, and financiers to speak as representative nationals on League commissions. This new stage is one which is coming the more naturally because the International Labor Office has always done its share of the League's work on a functional basis, employers and labor being represented separately from their governments. And while the trend is too recent to make it advisable to overemphasize the point, it requires no ardent imagination to realize that it may be one of great significance. But in any case, the gradual substitution of a basically syndicalist for a basically socialist technique would make American cooperation with the League much easier. For we know that Mr. Babbitt would not hate the I.W.W. so much if Rotary and syndicalism did not have a common philosophical basis.

The steadily increasing power of the Secretariat and the rapid development of administrative technique on the part of the international commissions which the Secretariat serves (and sometimes does much to direct) are vital changes of the League's first decade which have passed almost unnoticed in the public eye. Much more attention has been paid to the obvious changes in its parliamentary organs, the Council and the Assembly. And it is noticeable that while the technical commissions are developing the idea of functional representation, both Council and Assembly are becoming accurately representative of the governments of the member states.

The Council is today a much less dominant organ than was anticipated by those who framed the Covenant of the League during the peace conference. To mention only the most striking outward alteration, the Great Powers are no longer numerically supreme. The five permanent members, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan, are now outnumbered nearly two to one by the nine non-permanent members, three of which are elected by the Assembly every year for three-year terms. One effect of this change, among others, has been to make the Council much more nearly an executive cabinet for the Assembly than the upper legislative house to which the smaller body has sometimes been falsely compared.

Actually, though not theoretically, the executive functions of the Council are shared in an undefinable degree with the heads of the Secretariat. These full-time servants of the League are frequently better informed on problems before the Council than are the busy national statesmen who control the latter. The Council, however, still maintains in latent form the powers attributed to it by the framers of the Covenant. It formally appoints, though the Secretariat may actually name, the personnel of the various international commissions. The reports of these commissions must receive Council approval before they take the form of international conventions to be acted upon by the governments of the world. And no development of the World Court or of other machinery to preserve peace is likely to rob the Council of its essential function as a tribune of first instance for the consideration of problems affecting peace.

The Assembly, on the other hand, is steadily tending to increase its authority and to develop powers which few people in Paris in 1919 thought this "talking shop" would ever dream of assuming. Its growing importance is reflected in the character of the national delegations which compose it. At the First Assembly, for instance, only four European nations were represented by their foreign ministers, while at the Tenth Assembly, last September, only four European nations failed to send their foreign ministers. In the case of non-European countries, it is now the custom for the national delegation to be headed by the dean of the diplomats accredited to Europe, though even lands distant from Geneva are beginning to send those responsible for foreign policy to the annual sessions, as Cuba and Panama did in 1929. The result of this concentration of authority is that the Assembly is becoming a great world forum for public declarations of national policy. It is not merely the League program, but also a general picture of the current foreign policy of all the member states, which is adumbrated in the formal Assembly speeches each September.

Less dramatic, but no less important, has been the development of the Assembly organization, which now functions with an almost too machine-like precision. With the development of this organization the Assembly has taken over from the Council the control of League finance and thereby established its right to be considered the most important of the League organs. At the last Assembly preliminary steps were taken toward giving this body a permanent organization which would be prepared to function during the eleven months of the year when the Assembly is not in formal session. It is the smaller nations, notably Norway, which have taken the lead in increasing the power of the Assembly. Yet it is only eleven years since Lord Robert Cecil observed with engaging frankness that in the work of the League "the smaller Powers will in any case not exercise any considerable influence."

The rapid organic development of the League—in itself probably a symptom of health and vitality—does not stop short with the central mechanism of Secretariat and commissions, Council and Assembly. The International Labor Office, founded perhaps on too grandiose a scale because of the feeling that it would prove a counter-attraction to Bolshevism in the workers' minds, has now settled down as an important, though secondary, technical and humanitarian arm of the League. The Permanent Court of International Justice is closely linked with Geneva as the League's supreme

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tribunal. Before the International Bank is organized, pressure to bring it under the League aegis gets under way. Undoubtedly, those who maintain that American membership in either court or labor office or bank would be a move toward membership in the League are correct in that conclusion.

In short, evolution has brought about a League of Nations which is very different from that sketched out in Paris during those recent, yet very distant, days when the Allied representatives sought a compromise between the ideal of an organized world community and an organization which should serve to stereotype the war-time settlements. The old emphasis on the enforcement of peace has passed. The idea of a League army is a patent absurdity to anyone who knows of the direction in which the League is going. As the fog of suspicion passes away, Americans see a patient, tireless, and unspectacular organization working to secure peace by the development of cooperative agencies for the mutual benefit of all. Successes in this line are not of the type to create newspaper headlines, but perhaps they are none the less vital for that. And more and more we see revealing indications that along with its daily grind the League is bringing a new outlook upon world politics. The Chinese representative at the last Assembly proclaimed with no open protest that the time is drawing near for that body to exercise its authority under Article XIX of the Covenant, which says: "The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable. . . ."

Thus it is that here in Geneva a formal anniversary—even the tenth—is subordinate in interest to the limitless possibilities of the unfolding future. The League looks forward, not back, and leaves the dead past to bury its dead. Too much is being done, too much remains to be done, to linger at this early milestone on a road where the way ahead is just beginning to be clear.

In the Driftway

WILL science save us from war? Robert A. Millikan said it would in his presidential address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science the other day, but the Drifter thinks that in that particular the distinguished physicist was not on as firm ground as elsewhere in his remarks. He relaxed as a scientist to become a prophet, and although Dr. Millikan is not without honor in his own country, that honor has come to him for his science, not for his prophesying. The Drifter might hesitate to attack Dr. Millikan as a scientist, but prophecy is everybody's domain and one in which the Drifter finds himself especially at home because there is little responsibility attached to it—and practically no retribution. In fact, prophecies are usually forgotten unless they come true. Dr. Millikan is quoted as saying:

> In my judgment, war is now in process of being abolished, chiefly by this relentless advance of science, its most powerful enemy. It has existed in spite of religion, and in spite of philosophy, and in spite of social ethics, and in spite of the Golden Rule, since the days of the caveman . . . simply because it has had survival value.
>
> It will disappear like the dinosaur when, and only when, the conditions which have given it survival value have disappeared, and those conditions are disappearing now, primarily because of changes in the world situation being brought about by the growth of modern science.

The Drifter can see nothing in the history of science, unfortunately, that justifies such a position. If Dr. Millikan is using the word science in its strict sense as knowledge of the physical world, then it is almost a truism that science has done nothing about war since time began except to make it more deadly. During the past century the physical sciences have advanced more than they did for a thousand years preceding. Yet the past hundred years, in which science has risen side by side with the capitalist system of industry, have seen a prodigious increase in the scope if not in the causes of war. Present economic tendencies are all away from competition among individuals or small groups and toward fights among great cartels or combinations, each backed by its respective government, the latter supported by a nationalistic patriotism which has largely displaced the old-time religions in its emotional and unreasoning character.

* * * * *

JUST previous to 1914 Norman Angell suggested the incompatibility of internationalized industry and war. It didn't turn out quite that way, and one surmises that advancing science will of itself be equally powerless to prevent war. We shall have, after all, to call upon philosophy, which Dr. Millikan—in the quoted statement—would seem to regard as impotent. In other words, the one probable cure for war is the adoption of cooperation in industry, individual and national, in place of the present insane, cut-throat competition, the essence of which is mutual extermination. Meanwhile war will continue to have its "survival value." Human beings will have to progress further toward reasonable and reasoning animals before they can banish the specter of war, no matter how much they possess of science. And here it is interesting to remark the ideas expressed before the American Philosophical Association by William Ernest Hocking of Harvard University the day after Dr. Millikan's address. Denying the popular notion that Americans are flexible—that is, real—thinkers, Professor Hocking said:

> It is because we are dominantly a people of deeds that we are inclined to be a dogmatic nation, believing stiffly in eternal principles, final convictions, natural rights, an unchanging Constitution, and mechanical theologies. The great public work of the instrumental philosophy has been to limber up the ways of knowing of this people, to give the intellectually traditional, authority-making, hero-worshiping American the courage of his own experience.

* * * * *

THE Drifter sees immense possibilities in modern philosophy and psychology for the direction and control of the human mind, so that man in a surprisingly short time may make astounding gains in rationalism. We are not impossibly at the beginning of a great mental age just as we are in the midst of a great material one. There lies the end of war rather than in science, which has never done anything but stand behind the ropes, fan the fighters when they flop in their corners, and push them out again with a fresher, more deadly punch in their fists.

THE DRIFTER

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Correspondence

New York Has Magistrates

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I should like to register my protest against the undeserved tongue-lashing given to young David Weiss by Magistrate Sabbatino. When I read the case, I thought that the decision had been rendered in some small "hick" town. Imagine, therefore, my surprise and disgust when I read that the case had been decided in a court of enlightened New York.

How is it possible for a magistrate completely to ignore the charge on which young Weiss was arraigned in order to challenge his political beliefs?

New York, December 30 D. Halpern

And There You Are!

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: In the Christmas Day edition of the Chicago *Tribune* was a news item to the effect that Cardinal Mundelein's chauffeur-driven $14,000 limousine was stolen. (It was promptly recovered.) I may be mistaken, of course, but in my naive way I associate the ownership of such an expensive automobile with wealth—with great wealth even. Jesus admonished men that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Cardinal Mundelein evidently prefers his heaven on earth.

In the same issue of the Chicago *Tribune,* several columns removed from the report of the theft of Cardinal Mundelein's limousine, are to be found glowing accounts of the felicity spread among Chicago's poor by the "Good Fellows." Thirty-three hundred of these "Good Fellows," recruited by the Chicago *Tribune,* made one day in the year pleasant for some 22,000 of the most indigent of the city's "have-nots." Which is very nice. But what about the other 364 days?

I even make so bold as to hint that most, if not all, of these miserable poor would have been better off if they had never been born, and that they probably wouldn't have been if a plutocratically endowed church, in conjunction with the state, hadn't kept them in the dark about such matters as birth control. Cardinal Mundelein, high representative of the Christ, is driven around in a $14,000 limousine. The Catholic church is uncompromisingly against birth control. And there you are.

Chicago, December 25 Mandel Packard

Two Monopolies

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I have read with great interest an article in a recent issue of your periodical by Mr. Paul Anderson in which two monopolies are described, one being the radio trust and the other *The Nation.* The radio trust monopolizes the air and *The Nation* monopolizes intelligence about the air monopoly. I believe Mr. Anderson did suggest that occasionally he sent a brief item about the radio trust to his own paper, the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch.*

Inadvertently I have been guilty of a feeble effort to interfere with your intelligence monopoly. I attended Senate committee hearings on the radio trust, consulted Mr. Anderson, conferred with him, and actually wrote a few thousand words about the probe for the Raleigh, N. C., *News and Observer.* It did not occur to me that anybody had a monopoly on the reports. Imagine my surprise when I learned of your claim. If you feel that I am unduly intruding, I suggest that you get out an injunction. The radio trust would surely do so if I intruded into its exclusive patent field.

Washington, January 1 John A. Livingstone

Prejudice North and South

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: The N. Y. U.-Georgia football game was played many weeks ago, but I read your comment on the Myers episode, which occasions this letter, only quite recently. I think one can assume with confidence that you would like to see an end of Southern prejudice against the Negro.

May I remind you what a relative thing tolerance is? The prejudiced Southerner is not alone in drawing the color line; he simply draws it at a different place from where his "unprejudiced" Northern brother draws it. The former balks at playing football with the Negro; the latter balks at having him marry into his own family. In France the degree of difference would be thought small.

Viewing race hatred as a social phenomenon flourishing inevitably in certain environments all over the world, with causes that can be as readily adduced as the causes for, say, goiter, scurvy, and pellagra, one is puzzled by the rancor with which you so insistently styled the youngsters on the Georgia football team "Southern gentlemen." Surely in an era as scientific as this one there are better expedients for fighting fire than fire itself.

Albemarle, N. C., December 6 L. J. McGinty

The "Lie-Detector"

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: The "lie-detector" used by the prosecuting attorney here is all that you say it is in the Driftway of December 11. But you evidently didn't get the last report. You will be glad to learn that when the "evidence" so obtained came before Judge Malcolm Douglas, he ruled against recognition of it and ordered the prosecutor to discontinue the use of the instrument, at which that gentleman was sorely aggrieved.

The case is one that has aroused considerable feeling against the accused man, but despite that and despite the deplorable apathy with which the public usually regards the administration of justice, the use of this modern instrument of torture has not added anything to the prestige of Mr. Colvin, the prosecutor. The local Hearst paper, the *Post-Intelligencer,* made much of the device and its use, in the sensational and unscrupulous manner of certain newspapers of the day, but after several days of glaring headlines, numerous photographs, and reams of copy, the entire business suddenly collapsed.

The "Oregon boot" which was mentioned in the account you read is the name formerly applied to a strap fastened to the ankle to which was attached a piece of iron shaped somewhat like a pick. These were used on prisoners working in road gangs to encumber their movements. It hardly seems necessary to handicap a man who is safely behind prison walls, but our prosecutor's mind evidently is of a medieval cast. It is also possible that what is here spoken of as the "Oregon boot" is an entirely different contrivance from the one which was known by that name among migratory workers of the West ten or fifteen years ago.

Seattle, December 16 Victoria Marshang

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Books and Drama

These Humble People

By EDA LOU WALTON

Looking upon their mountains all day long
Where shadows slipping downward like cooled lava
Leave the white heart burning;
Looking upon their mountains crumbling
To ashes in the windy night,
These humble people never lift their hands
Palm-lit in prayer to sunlight, never carve
Their granite to thin altars toward unpitying skies.
Heaven will have its way, they know,
Even with mountains, smelting them in sun,
And shadows will run downward into valleys;
Under some star these iron peaks will flow
Like ribbons out across the pit of night,
They know, and they have followed with their hands
This sure decay,
Have seen the flesh withering on the bough,
And the tree ash; and will not pray
Before their graven images.
To mountains which endure beyond their sight
They look, and pass their hands before their eyes
And stare on darkness, hearing rivers run
Under the stone, and wings beat down piled dust.

Insight and Charm

Lord Lansdowne: A Biography. By Lord Newton, P.C. The Macmillan Company. $8.50.

LORD NEWTON'S charming biography of Lord Lansdowne is a joy to the casual reader no less than to the serious scholar. Any intelligent person will delight in the skill, the humor, and the sympathetic but independent attitude with which one British aristocrat has drawn the portrait of another great personality. The serious student of history and politics will admire Lord Newton's perfect acquaintance with the vast mass of documents now available on pre-war diplomacy, his self-restraint in quoting but sparingly from it, and the judiciousness with which he has drawn fresh material from the Lansdowne papers to supplement it.

Lord Lansdowne, who was born in 1845, was well qualified by inheritance for diplomacy, as his grandfather was probably Talleyrand and not Count de Flahault. He entered office under Gladstone, but soon resigned because he profoundly disapproved, as a great Irish landlord, of some of Gladstone's legislation for Ireland. Under a Conservative government, as Governor-General of Canada and Viceroy of India, his tact, industry, and good sense brought him success. He introduced no striking changes, but he avoided serious blunders, and that is saying much. Becoming Secretary of War in the Salisbury Cabinet of 1895, he had the ungrateful task of conducting the Boer War until Lord Salisbury's failing health and resignation brought him to the head of the Foreign Office in the autumn of 1900.

The new Foreign Secretary had difficult furrows to plow in a flinty soil. The Germans were raging over the treatment of the Boers. The French were still sore over Fashoda. The Russians held to their traditional hostility. Lord Lansdowne was desirous of better relations with the Kaiser, but the obstacles in the way of an alliance were too great. Lord Newton is undoubtedly correct in his view that the failure of the alliance negotiations with Germany was not altogether Germany's fault; but even if successful, "William II would have been almost intolerable as an ally." The failure of the German negotiations was followed by the alliance with Japan and the entente with France. The credit for the latter belongs mainly to Lansdowne and Paul Cambon. Edward VII's influence, Lord Newton thinks, has been greatly exaggerated in this connection. Delcassé he depicts as secretive and unreliable, a man "whose stock of courage barely lasted long enough to achieve a successful result, and who imperiled the whole agreement by haggling over details in the final stages of the negotiations." Delcassé's claim in 1905 that Lansdowne had promised British armed support Lord Newton declares to have been the preposterous figment of the French minister's imagination. But he also quotes a letter from Lord Sanderson that in 1905 "there was some loose talk by Lord Fisher and even more exalted persons as to a possible landing on the Schleswig coast." This seems to support the view which the present reviewer has ventured to express that Sir John Fisher's reckless utterances may have been part of the basis of Delcassé's exaggerated claim about British promises of support.

Lord Lansdowne was never obsessed by the anti-German hysteria which afflicted some of his countrymen. He regretted that England did not cooperate at the outset in the building of the Bagdad Railway. He found it difficult to deal with such a theatrical, susceptible, and unstable person as the Kaiser, but was forced to admit that his own sovereign's attitude was embarrassing; Edward VII wrote and talked about the Kaiser, he says, "in terms which make one's flesh creep, and the official papers which go to him, whenever they refer to H. I. M., come back with all sorts of annotations of a most incendiary character."

Lord Lansdowne's famous peace letter of November, 1917, which certainly contributed to the formulation of Wilson's Fourteen Points, brought down a storm of criticism on his old head. Geoffrey Dawson hesitated to accept it for the London *Times*, but Lord Burnham was glad to print it in the *Daily Telegraph*. It is often spoken of as though it originated in a sudden fit of pessimism; Lord Newton shows that it was almost identical with a memorandum which Lansdowne laid before the Cabinet a year earlier, and that it expressed his long-felt conviction that the Allies should come to a clear understanding as to reasonable terms of peace and the possibility of Germany's acceptance of them.

Lord Newton frequently indulges in interesting and often humorous comments. He concludes his highly diverting account of the Persian Shah's struggle for the Garter, which King Edward at first refused to give him, with a sage observation on "how large a part decorations played, and presumably still play, in exalted circles" as valuable assets in diplomacy. In connection with the decisive letter of August 2, 1914, pledging the support of the Conservatives to Sir Edward Grey, the author says the Germans were unlucky in making war when a Liberal government was in office in England, "for it is inconceivable that a Conservative government, under similar circumstances, could have received assurances of support from a united Liberal Party." Lansdowne's success as leader in such a peculiar body as the House of Lords was owing to "his gift of suffering fools gladly."

Not the least attractive feature of the volume are the photographs and cartoons picturing Lord Lansdowne in varied activities from a boy of thirteen to a sportsman of eighty landing a twenty-one pound fish.

SIDNEY B. FAY

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Russian Irony

The Embezzlers. By Valentine Kataev. Translated from the Russian by L. Zarine. With an Introduction by Stephen Graham. The Dial Press. $2.50.

THIS is an excellent and beautifully translated story of two very ordinary exemplars of the human species: two Soviet citizens—a henpecked, middle-aged accountant who in his reveries of "high life" imagines himself to be "that wonderful and unattainable Count Guido . . . who . . . leaped on his charger . . . etc. . . ." and an impressionable, hero-worshiping little cashier, his subordinate. Inadvertently, as a result of a few innocent drinks on top of a romantic disposition, these most ordinary citizens launch upon a dizzy career of embezzlement and drunken debauchery. They begin in Moscow but, before realizing it, they find themselves, with the payroll in their pockets and a harlot by their side, en route for Leningrad, the imagined El Dorado. Thereafter, through a phantasmagoria of trains, cabs, clubs, and doss-houses, in the company of prostitutes, ex-princesses, paupers, and peasants, our adventurers, while the money lasts, fatuously pursue a "vaguely imagined" but "never attained" ecstasy. Finally the moment comes when, their money gone, they are forced to pawn their overcoats and, beaten and despondent, make their way back to Moscow. The story ends with the sorry spectacle of two desolate knights errant marching to prison.

In his introduction Stephen Graham praises this "very clever book . . . written in the vein of Gogol's 'Dead Souls'" as "more real in detail and color than any picture given us" of Soviet Russia, and as the cause of much "whole-hearted laughter." This praise brings to mind an episode famous in the annals of Russian letters. Once, the story goes, Gogol was reading to Pushkin chapters from "Dead Souls." At first the great poet laughed "whole-heartedly" at Gogol's immortal Chichikov and his roguish schemes. Gradually, however, as the reading progressed, and as the distressing gallery of grafting officials and savage serf-owners, the Sobakeviches, Pliushkins, Manilovs, and Korobochkas passed before his eyes, the poet grew terribly silent and morose. At the end, utterly crushed, he muttered: "What a wretched, wretched place our Russia is!"

One wonders what the poet's reaction would have been to "The Embezzlers," a work so similar in vein to "Dead Souls." On me, I confess, this novel has a strangely depressing effect. And this, I am certain, is not at all due to any outraged sense of civic virtue, or to any belief that the picture of Soviet Russia presented by Kataev is "more *real* in detail and color than any picture given us" of that country. On the contrary, the dire punishment of the peculators is enough to appease the most vindictive virtue, while the fact that "The Embezzlers" is a satire is reassuring evidence that it is not "more real" than many another picture given us of Soviet life. Clearly, a satire is never, strictly speaking, real; it is a caricature, a distortion; it emphasizes out of all proportion one feature, one aspect, one phase of a very complex reality. Indeed, there are numerous Russian books, many of them obtainable in English translation (Veresaiev's "Deadlock," Pilniak's "Naked Year," Babel's "Cavalry Sketches," Libedinsky's "A Week," Tolstoy's "Azure Cities," Gladkov's "Cement," Ognyov's "Diary of a Communist Schoolboy"), that would correct any such lopsided notion of Soviet Russia as one might form from reading the present satire. Moreover, the high literary quality of the story as well as the large measure of self-criticism contained in it is further striking proof of the great vitality of Russian letters, and of the generous latitude granted to Soviet writers by the Communist censor. Seen thus from a purely Russian point of view, Kataev's novel, despite the lurid light it throws on the "strange peculations prevalent in the offices of the Soviet trusts," is distinctly hope-inspiring.

It is the universal, all-human implications of the book that are depressing. It is the realization that this story is as American or German or Chinese as it is Russian, and that the two unfortunate heroes, so utterly innocent of any wrong intentions, so pathetically frustrated in their delirious pursuit after a will-o'-the-wisp, are replicas of the vast majority of mankind, that is depressing. The story contains neither the purifying exaltation of tragedy nor the amusing relief of comedy. What it does have is a dark, persistent, haunting, and in its cumulative effect utterly crushing overtone of irony—an irony which, rising as it does above any particular time or place, provokes anything but "whole-hearted" laughter.

JOSHUA KUNITZ

An American Knight

The Book of Arthur Gleason. My People. By Arthur Gleason. *"A. G.": An Appreciation.* By Helen Hayes Gleason. William Morrow and Company. $2.50.

I FEEL as I lay down "The Book of Arthur Gleason" that it represents the man infinitely better than a complete, proportionate work all neated up about the edges. Seventy-five pages of his essays and private writings, varying between mere chips from his literary workshop to pages of astonishing beauty, completeness, and meaning; a hundred and fifty pages of scattered but vital reminiscence by Mrs. Gleason; the book has no conscious pattern. But it depicts him as no biography, novelized after the modern plan, could possibly do. It has not been necessary to prune episodes and incidents to fit a plot of action or character, to prove a thesis. Such a book might have created a fine picture; this conveys a thing of flesh and blood, a man.

And what a man—above all, what an American! The book, I think, would have proved that to me even had I not known Arthur Gleason. We are not likely again to see in our time such a flowering of the American colonial breed. He had even the background. There was distinguished public service in his ancestry, including a signer of the Declaration; and almost typically he was a minister's son. He had the aristocratic mind, which sees and judges everything from the standpoint of taste and tolerance, along with thoroughly democratic instincts and beliefs. That combination, it seems to me, has marked all our great Americans of the old stock from Washington down. He abandoned early the dogmatic Puritanism in which he was reared but he kept the fine essence of Puritanism in the obligations which he laid upon his own soul—the Puritanism not of Praise-God Barebones and Cotton Mather, but of Milton and Emerson. That old-American stock was a breed of poets, whether they expressed themselves in action like John Brown and Kit Carson, in daily speech like Lincoln, or on paper like Whitman. That streak infused not only those fine-cut sentences of the essays, but his daily life; as witness the tender fantasy of the Star which Mrs. Gleason records.

Though in politics he saw the necessity of collective forces, he was personally an individualist almost to madness. He quit even the old *Collier's*, where he might have been happy if anywhere in chains, because his spirit could not endure the time-clock. His faction in politics was mostly anti-Ally in the early stages of the late war. He saw for himself during the German advance into Belgium, and became convinced that what he desired of this world could never come to fulfilment if Germany won. Being what he was, he could not draw without shooting, could not let others bear the burden of his beliefs.

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So he tried, simply and quietly, to enlist in the British army. Refused, he became heart and soul of a free-lance "ambulance outfit" in Flanders, braving the concentrated German shell-fire to save the lives of the wounded. In this service he was not the knight without fear and reproach; he has confessed that himself. Better, he was the knight with fear and without reproach. He faced danger as any man of imagination must, and faced it imperturbably nevertheless.

He had a touch of that cosmic consciousness which has marked all our greater American mystics like Whitman, Thoreau, and Lincoln. Above all, he radiated kindness. I am not exaggerating my conviction when I call this quality of his Christ-like. Mrs. Gleason, in her simple, eloquent, delicately reserved narrative of her husband's life with her, cites a few instances; I could cite many more. When they met, he was keeping his nose to the grindstone putting a boy through college, helping a friend in difficulties, "carrying people." Though he needed money desperately at the time, he gave most of the receipts from his war books to war charities. Miraculously, he finished the war a thousand dollars ahead of the game. Though the worldly-wise considered the investment very risky, he put the money into French bonds; he wanted to do his bit to help a people with whose sufferings he had suffered, and whom he admired. I think sometimes of those boys who died in his arms in Flanders. Their passing had better benediction than any priest could give.

I had forgotten until I renewed acquaintance in these essays how well Gleason wrote, what a mastery he had of his working tools. It may be association with him, it may be inherent quality, but Mrs. Gleason's writing, in the major part of this book, has something of the same final and simple poetic quality as her husband's. In recommending it as a whole, I am obliged to fall back on an old Samuel Smiles phrase of my boyhood; it is "a good book to put into the hands of youth." For here, all expressed, is the finest model for American manhood and gentlemanhood that I have known in my time.

WILL IRWIN

Speculation

A History of Financial Speculation. By R. H. Mottram. Little, Brown, and Company. $4.

THIS volume has little significance for those who have participated in the recent campaign on the New York stock exchange. It contains no recipes for bulls or bears who seek rules for reducing losses or increasing gains by trading in securities. On the other hand, the student of history may, by close and attentive reading, find clues to the forces which have determined the development of the economic life of the world.

Speculation is generously interpreted. It applies to all human activity which is directed to the acquisition of more than is needed for immediate consumptive wants, for the purpose of trading such acquisition for gain. According to Mr. Mottram, this activity is inherent in human nature, for his narrative opens with several pages describing the flint-mining industry of a neolithic tribe in England, as an illustration of primitive efforts to produce more than could be personally or directly used. Speculation is of immemorial antiquity. Speculation in brief is "dealing in fluctuating values." As long as there are fluctuating values, there will be speculation. But economic institutions are becoming more and more stabilized, and monopolies, in whose soil speculation thrives, are less and less potent. The leveling-up processes of democracy are gradually lessening inequalities. Mr. Mottram's exposition is much broader than his title and concerns political and commercial movements as well as the narrower field of financial investments.

Mr. Mottram traces the rise of financial speculation from ancient times through the development of banking and commercial institutions in Italy, Holland, and England down to the present time. Unfortunately the material is not well organized. The reader jumps back and forth from one country to another—from England to France, to Germany, and occasionally to the United States, frequently seeking in vain for dates which will record his rapid progress. The author, formerly a banker and more recently the recipient of the Hawthornden prize for the "Spanish Farm" trilogy, has read widely, but only those who have a well-stocked background of historical knowledge can follow his comments and interpretation with utmost advantage. With this background, one will find the scholarly analysis illuminating and suggestive.

DAVIS R. DEWEY

Hardly Worth While

The Sound and the Fury. By William Faulkner. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $2.50.

PROBABLY someone has already remarked that the perfect enjoyment of great literature involves two factors. The reader should make an analysis of the methods employed by the artist to produce a given effect; and at the same time he should experience a synthetic appreciation of that effect in its emotional totality. The analysis must be almost instantaneous, almost unconscious. Otherwise the reader may become enmeshed in a tangle of aesthetic judgments, and experience difficulty in feeling the work of art as a whole.

Here, perhaps, lies the problem of comprehending the present-day revolutionary novelist. Frequently the intelligent reader can grasp the newer literary anarchies only by an effort of analytical attention so strained that it fatigues and dulls his emotional perception. He is so occupied in being a detective that by the time he has to his own satisfaction clarified the artist's intentions and technique he is too worn out to feel anything further. This is why the Joycean method of discontinuity has been entirely successful only when applied to materials of Joycean proportions. For it is obvious that if the theme is sufficiently profound, the characters sufficiently extraordinary, the plot sufficiently powerful, the reader is bound to absorb some of all this despite the strain on his attention. But if, after an interval of puzzle-solving, it dawns upon him that the action and characters are minuscular, he is likely to throw the book away in irritation. The analysis has taken too long for the synthesis to be worth the trouble.

This seems to me to be the case with "The Sound and the Fury," a novel by an extremely talented young writer dealing with the mental and physical disintegration of a Southern family. Mr. Faulkner's work has been magnificently praised by Evelyn Scott and other critics for whose opinions one must have respect. It is in all humility, therefore, that I record the feeling that the theme and the characters are trivial, unworthy of the enormous and complex craftsmanship expended on them. I do not see, for example, that Dilsey is more than a faithful old Negress; she is not, for me at least, "stoic as some immemorial carving of heroism," nor does she "recover for us the spirit of tragedy which the patter of cynicism has often made seem lost." I admit that the idiocy of the thirty-three-year-old Benjy is admirably grasped by Mr. Faulkner, but one hundred pages of an imbecile's simplified sense perceptions and monosyllabic gibberings, no matter how accurately recorded, are too much of a good thing. Similarly, Quentin and Jason are not sufficiently interesting, not large enough, in a symbolic sense, to make it worth while to follow painfully the ramifications of their minds and memories.

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One has the feeling that Mr. Faulkner's experiments in the breaking-up of consciousness, in the abolition of chronology and psychological continuity, are both ingenious and sincere, but they are not absolutely necessary to his story. The fact that his material includes imbecility, incest, paranoia, and sadism does not mean that his tale is therefore complicated or obscure and in need of oblique and bizarre treatment. The relationships between his characters are a trifle unhealthy, one must admit, but must the prose in which they are described therefore be feverish? After one has penetrated the mad, echoing labyrinth of Mr. Faulkner's style one finds a rather banal Poe-esque plot, a set of degenerate whites whose disintegration is irritating rather than appalling, and two or three Negro characters who, if they were reproduced in straight prose, would appear as fairly conventional types. Sound and fury indeed. Signifying (the witticism is cheap, but inevitable) almost nothing.

CLIFTON P. FADIMAN

Two English Poets

Collected Poems (1914-1926). By Robert Graves. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Poems: 1929. By Robert Graves. Hammersmith, London: The Seizin Press. 8s. 6d.

Collected Poems. By D. H. Lawrence. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. Two volumes. $5.

Pansies. Poems. By D. H. Lawrence. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

NEITHER Mr. Graves nor Mr. Lawrence has gained very much by collecting his poems. Both, indeed, may have lost, for at least one reader has decided, after going through a great deal here which disappointed him, that they were not quite the poets he had thought they were when their separate works survived only as memories. The cold test of print is too much for a pair who previously had every right to be considered among the most interesting poets in contemporary England.

Mr. Graves, for instance, has for several years seemed to me the most noteworthy member of his generation. I remembered The Pier-Glass, "The General Elliott," The Gnat, Lost Love, The Dialecticians, In Procession, and other pieces of remarkable skill and originality. The difficulty now is in finding enough of those other pieces to make the whole achievement of the man impressive. What I do find, outside of the titles I have mentioned, is an interminable series of forced and silly gaieties, labored antics in none too readable verse, and complicated controversies with contemporaries who do not matter. Doubtless I exaggerate; and I must not neglect to mention two poems at the end of the collection, Pure Death and The Cool Web, which seem to me incontestably subtle and fine. But the net effect is disappointment. I still think Mr. Graves more interesting than most of his generation, and of course it is much to have made so deep a mark with so few poems. It is merely a pity that they are so few; bulk after all has its value.

Mr. Graves's new book, "Poems: 1929," takes him farther in the "metaphysical" direction indicated by Pure Death and The Cool Web. If anything it takes him too far, since he gets —as was perhaps inevitable—into excesses of ingenuity. The book is clever and searching, yet once again I feel that Mr. Graves is betrayed by the very intelligence that made him first interesting; there is always the danger that as he flies from sentiment, which he hates too bitterly, he will run into aridity. Mr. Graves is so worried lest he shall write bad—meaning for him conventional—poetry that he does indeed write bad poetry of a very special kind. I wish he could free himself from a sense that he is chosen to keep English poetry pure. Perhaps English poetry will take care of itself, and meanwhile these brilliant gifts of his might exhibit themselves with a becoming freedom.

Mr. Lawrence was never a poet whom one could be concerned about in this way. He was windy, wordy, blustering, sprawling, and frequently absurd. I supposed that in spite of such qualities, or even because of them, the two volumes of his collected poems would be entertaining; the gusto of his prejudices, I thought, would carry one through. It did not. The first of the two volumes, containing early pieces in rhyme, was positively dreary in its insistence upon the uniqueness and dark excellence of the author's personality; and the second volume, while much better than this, still waved a wilted greatness at the reader. Look! We Have Come Through is sometimes a noble autobiography in verse, and Birds, Beasts, and Flowers must long be remembered for its section on the love life (as a certain American humorist would put it) of the tortoise; yet in general the brooding done by Mr. Lawrence is hectic, and the shouting is horribly loud.

"Pansies," which is Mr. Lawrence's English for "Pensées," shows him still hot on the trail of truth and still convinced that it is important for him to tell us how he feels about everything. It is a series of capricious utterances, most of them brief and many of them pointed with a luminous if half-mad irony. The volume is valuable as an anthology of his opinions, even when they are expressed, as they often are, without any poetry whatever. When poetry does creep in the note is grim or amusing, or both; as here:

> Elephants in the circus
> have aeons of weariness round their eyes.
> Yet they sit up
> and show vast bellies to the children.

MARK VAN DOREN

The Quaker and the Quantum

Science and the Unseen World. By A. S. Eddington. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

EDDINGTON has three reputations and three streams of influence. He is an astronomer, both mathematical and experimental, of first importance. He has influenced and won the undoubted respect of his professional colleagues. He is a gifted humanistic expounder of the new physics and astrophysics and of the general theory of relativity. He has won a large popular following. He is a man of religious feeling, mystical in character and specifically Quaker in persuasion. To a great many persons who for one reason or another wish to escape a "nightmare" reality such as nineteenth-century materialism seems to provide, he comes as a leading and kindly light. There is salvation, there is still belief. The new physics apparently makes place for something very like the old God.

A careful examination of this small but revealing book indicates not the nature of the physical world, but the nature of the mind of Eddington when it touches religious matters. Liberal theologians have taken him up because they think here is the latest scientific support for the belief in the existence of God. Eddington himself expressly denies that it is his intention to produce such proof or that he thinks science can do it: "It is probably true that the recent changes of scientific thought remove some of the obstacles to a reconciliation of religion with science; but this must be carefully distinguished from any proposal to base religion on scientific discovery. For my own part I am wholly opposed to such an attempt."

Eddington's counsel toward religious faith derives indeed not so much from the new physics but from an old philosophy, a philosophy as old at least as Kant. Eddington wishes, to

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start with, to go back to consciousness. "Consciousness alone can determine the validity of its convictions." "There shines no light save its own light to show itself to itself. The world of science is a realm of symbols, a system of shadows. It is revealed to, it is indeed determined by, the nature of mind. The realm of values and significances is likewise a system of symbols, borrowed from the elements of consciousness. But the world of value must use as its symbols those personal elements which the physical sciences must disregard." "We have to build the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our own personality, as we build the scientific world out of the symbols of the mathematician."

To many minds this assumption of two "worlds" constructed out of two sets of symbols will not seem so much the latest word from a scientist as the latest echo of Kant. This little book indeed is a classical example of the Kantian attempt to save science from chaos and religion from science. But it reveals more than it attempts to demonstrate, and its revelation is not so much of the objects of religious belief as the nature of religious experience. Eddington is an avowed Quaker, and the persistent appeal of that creedless sect lies largely in the atmosphere of mysticism, quiet, personal, and uncontroversial, which is the center and the circumference of its religious teaching and experience. There are not two worlds, one revealed by science, the other revealed by religion. The fact is Eddington has far from demonstrated that there are two worlds, one seen and the other unseen. He has simply given a renewed illustration of the fact that experience is wider than any set of intellectual structures which may be developed in its regulation and control. In this book he is not a scientist talking about the Unseen. He is a Quaker talking about a kind of experience, a sense of searching and a sense of light to which the formulas of quanta and of relativity are irrelevant. His Quakerism and his science are as usual beautifully stated, with humor, lucidity, and color. But they are not logically related to each other. The astronomer and the Friend meet here purely by accident. IRWIN EDMAN

A Prophet of Trees

Tree Crops. By J. Russell Smith. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.

J. RUSSELL SMITH is a poet-geographer and a preacher, despite the fact that he was once professor of industry at Pennsylvania and is now professor of economic geography at Columbia. He loves the green hillsides of America; and he wants to rouse America to the menace of corn-fields and make it the promised land of what he calls tree corn, tree beans, and tree meat.

"We Americans," he says, "are destroying soil by field wash faster than any people that ever lived—ancient or modern, savage, civilized, or barbarian." Wheat and rye hold the soil; our tillage of corn, cotton, and tobacco is "the most efficient known way for destroying the farm that is not made of level land." And he fills his book with savage photographs of washed-out gullies in Georgia that were good cotton land a few decades ago, today "gone to economic Hades." Major André, famous traitor, he remarks, "was not going to destroy any land; he would merely have changed the law-makers from one group to another." So we need a new definition of patriot and traitor: Smith's traitor is a man who plows a hillside; his patriot plants tree crops and studies them. He calls for an Institute of Mountain Agriculture to study the great problem of growing tree crops on hillsides, where the agricultural methods of the flat plain are an economic crime.

A man with a mission is always either a joy or a bore. Russell Smith is an unmitigated joy; his enthusiasm is infectious; he leaves you yearning to plant an acre—at least—to black walnuts and hybrid chestnuts and persimmons, and to make acorn meal and acorn bread such as sustained the Indians and John Muir. He wants the American farmer to learn that acorns and mulberries are cheaper hog food than is corn, that nut orchards are profitable, that honey locusts yield more sugar than sugar maples. And he wants scores of plant specialists to set to work, doing the same kind of painstaking hybridizing and experimentation which has produced golden bantam corn and the Des Moines Table Queen sweet potato squash. In his mind's eye he sees the rocky hillsides of New England and the hungry slopes of the Appalachians repopulated, bearing tree crops comparable to those of the finest Sicilian chestnut mountains. I suspect that he is one of the major prophets of our day. LEWIS S. GANNETT

Fiction Briefs

Hudson River Bracketed. By Edith Wharton. D. Appleton and Company. $2.50.

Mrs. Wharton, like all writers great and small, has her failures; "Hudson River Bracketed" is one of them. No one belittles an author's attempt to extend his scope, but Mid-Westerners have shown themselves so able to express their neighbors' frustrations that Mrs. Wharton's unsuccessful foray into their field adds nothing to her laurels. Her ambitious young genius from Illinois is only the husk of a character because his creator, scorning to exaggerate his potentialities or to allow him to become melodramatic about himself, fails equally to plumb the depths of his character, to show the internal play between his dawning self-consciousness and the pathetic experience of his career. As is to be expected, the description of the uninhabited house on the Hudson filled with the personality of the dead, the projection of the past into the present, the brief sketch of the Spears, are the best parts of the book—an observation which forces the repetition that Mrs. Wharton is still the one fine novelist of that small but tenacious class of Americans with a social and cultural tradition.

It's a Great War. By Mary Lee. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

This is the book which shared the American Legion prize for the best war novel. It is written by a woman who first served as a clerical worker with the army and later as a canteen worker with the "Y," and it records the frequently referred to but seldom explained Battle of Paris, and life in the rest camps behind the front and with the army of occupation. Miss Lee's keen eyes and ears did not miss much either good or bad, heroic or cowardly, fine or ridiculous, pure or foul that occurred around her behind the lines. In groups of unconnected words, phrases, and clauses she fires from her journalistic pen hundreds of varied scenes depicting the tell-tale truth about the general, the colonel, the captain, and the private. Besides giving evidence she draws three or four excellent character sketches, and sustains with breathless persistence the impression of the exciting abnormality of armed conflict.

The Desert of Love. By François Mauriac. Translated from the French by Samuel Putnam. Covici-Friede. $2.50.

A father and son love the same woman; the father's affection is undeclared because unreturned, the son's is misunderstood and repulsed. The parent stoically accepts an unhappy, embittered old age; the boy attempts to revenge his wounded vanity by inflicting pain on every other woman he meets throughout his life. As in all Mauriac's novels the scene is laid in the

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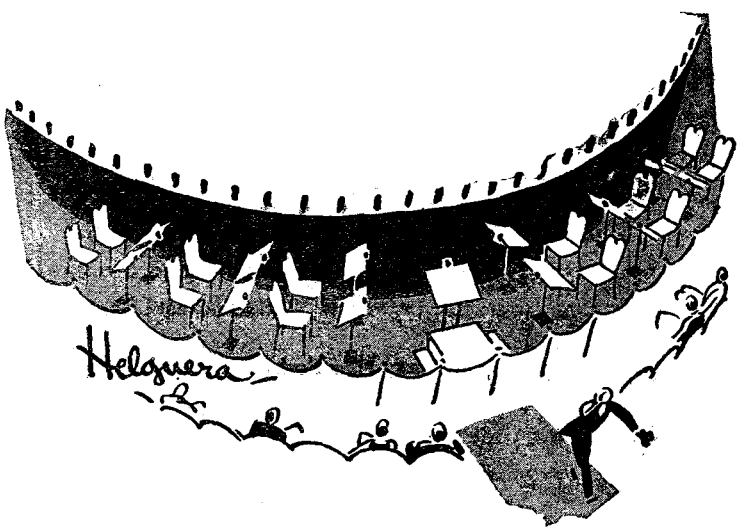

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southwest of France in the region around Bordeaux, but like all his characters the doctor, Raymond, and Maria are provincial only in the sense that they are creatures of a specialized environment in which their characteristics are more pronounced, more sharply developed, simplified, and intensified, and show more clearly than in a complex setting. The conflict arises not from the situation but from the action and reaction of temperaments dominated by relentless desires. Mauriac is a master of such impassioned people and of these strained, intimate dramas, and "The Desert of Love" is, like "Thérèse," a book for all who cherish fine writing.

Chariot Wheels. By Sylvia Thompson. Little, Brown, and Company. $2.50.

Sylvia Thompson's latest novel tells the story of Cressida Midge who, born into a conventional Victorian home, becomes interested in the new literary and political movements that are a part of her generation. Carried away by her admiration for him as a literary figure, she falls in love with and marries Lester Midge, a rising young radical editor-novelist. Midge has dealt with the various aspects of "modern love" and a "new freedom" in his novels and essays, but Cressida finds it difficult to adjust her life to his ideas when he puts them into practice. Part of the novel consists of an autobiographical sketch by their daughter who is of the post-war generation which her father describes as having a vitiated palate. "Chariot Wheels" is a thoroughly unimportant novel, but to those who like that kind of thing it may have a passing interest because of real or fancied resemblances which some of its characters bear to certain figures in the English literary world.

Doctor Fogg. By Norman Matson. The Macmillan Company. $2.

Doctor Fogg is a mechanical magician of the age of literary sophistication. His radio experiments produce an astral creature who has all the qualities of a D. W. Griffith heroine, and he is also able to communicate with other solar bodies. When his experiments are announced, the newspapers transform his work into a Graf Zeppelin exploit; the island where he works becomes a show place, and governments and capitalists bid for rights in Doctor Fogg's discoveries. Eventually Fogg destroys his creations and escapes to live in a comfortable cottage with his astral female. The book is better than similar works by Edgar Rice Burroughs, but it creaks with the workings of a correspondence-school plot formula. At best it is a rather dull book with several good wisecracks.

Drama

Portrait of an Egotist

IN "Meteor" (Guild Theater) Mr. S. N. Behrman has drawn a dramatic portrait of extraordinary richness and originality. Even the casual observer cannot fail to be intrigued by the vivid personality of his central character, but I doubt if such a casual observer is very likely to realize what a difficult feat the author has achieved. It is easy to say that your hero is a genius and it is not especially difficult to make the other dramatis personae act as though he were, but it is a very different matter to convince your audience and that is exactly what Mr. Behrman does.

The story which he has chosen to tell is not, in itself, very novel or very important. Indeed there is something artificial about this tale of his hero's rise to financial eminence—something factitious which suggests that it was invented without

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great enthusiasm and for no other reason than that a story of some sort was necessary. But this relative conventionality of plot is thrown into sharp relief by the vivid reality of its protagonist. From the very moment when this consummate and yet ingratiating egotist appears upon the scene he seizes upon the imagination of the spectator and holds it by virtue of that very fascination which is supposed to reduce his companions to impotent wonder. We are not asked to understand him and we never do. For us as for those who share the play with him he remains an all but incredible mixture of vanity and power—a man to be laughed at and to be labeled with all the names which psychologists have invented to chastise the pride of those who think abnormally well of themselves. But his reality is as indubitable as his secret is dark, and though the last curtain leaves us still wondering how much of his success is due to genius and how much to a delusion so powerful that it hypnotizes others as completely as it does its victim, the one thing we never doubt is the existence of the man whose portrait Mr. Behrman has so skilfully drawn. His vigor, his confidence, and his maniacal self-absorption are all there. So, too, are the touches of weakness and folly which make him human. Sometimes we suspect, as his companions sometimes do, that he is merely naive, but our doubts are never so strong as his faith and that, perhaps, is the secret of his power.

Some part of the credit for the brilliant effect must of course be given to Alfred Lunt, who plays the role, not only with great gusto but with a fine sense of its humorous overtones. Some part of it must also be accorded to Philip Moeller, who is said to have labored long over the production and to have introduced some important modifications into the spirit of the playing after the try-out in Boston. But the backbone of the character is in the text of the author and he has, I think, succeeded because of the extent to which he has been willing (and able!) to let his hero speak for himself. Whenever Mr. Behrman succumbs to the temptation to explain or analyze he is relatively weak. Even the touch of mysticism seems to me a blemish and so do all the other efforts to get inside the character or to explain him in terms of normal human nature. We can know such a man only from the outside. He takes our breath away with the directness of his vanity; he dazzles us with his success in realizing his own conception of his powers; and it is in the representation of these things that Mr. Behrman excels. In one sense his character is too much for him just as he is too much for his companions, but the record of his words and deeds is too vivid to be forgotten. If "Meteor" be considered as a whole it is doubtless far from perfect, but I cannot, at least offhand, think of any character in American drama who is likely to remain longer in the imagination of the spectator.

St. John Ervine's "The First Mrs. Fraser" (Playhouse) is as amusing as a comedy completely devoid of any kind of originality can very well be. Take all the drawing-room pieces written since Pinero and Jones popularized the "Mrs." titles; cut them into strips; shake in a hat; draw out a sufficient number of fragments; paste them together; and you will have something very like the new play. Nevertheless the pasting has been smoothly done, the whole is well acted, and the result, accordingly, an amusing evening.

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The Vatican and the Kremlin*

By LOUIS FISCHER

WHEN Pius XI ascended the throne in 1922 he was presented with the opportunity of achieving the greatest papal conquest in modern times: he could break up the Greek Catholic church and convert ninety million Eastern Orthodox Christians to Roman Catholicism. The separation of church from state in Russia after the Bolshevik revolution had weakened Greek orthodoxy economically and politically, and Communist campaigns against the church, specifically against the solidly and bitterly anti-Bolshevik Greek church which represented one of the chief organized opponents of the new regime, appeared to make Rome's task easier. Italian papers of the day published sarcastic cartoons showing the Holy See in the act of granting its blessing to Bolshevik efforts to combat Greek Catholicism.

The Polish Roman Catholic clergy obstructed the Pope's policy in the realization that it would succeed only at their expense. A Bolshevik understanding with the Vatican was possible only if the Holy Father consented to strip the Roman church in Russia of its Polish influence and leadership, yet even then Moscow would never sign a concordat or agreement with the Pope. The Bolsheviks merely offered to submit to the Vatican's examination a circular of the Commissariat of Justice relating to the rights of the Catholic church in the Soviet Union.

Father Edmund A. Walsh of Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., who was the Curia's official delegate to Moscow, directly told Chicherin that two tendencies existed at the Vatican: one led by the Pope which aimed at a compromise with the Bolsheviks and the winning of the vast multitude of simple-minded followers; the other represented by Walsh himself whose program was to combat Bolshevism.

The Bolsheviks noted this unique juxtaposition, but expected the Holy Father to dominate. In 1922 and 1923 they had not yet been recognized by the major Powers. Friendly relations with the Vatican could bring them certain benefits in Catholic countries and with Catholic parties in other countries. Such advantages are not to be overlooked by the makers of a realistic foreign policy. Moreover, the triumph of Roman Catholicism in Russia would be won at the expense of Greek Catholicism and of Polish prestige—results the Soviets were ready to greet and facilitate. Years would elapse before Roman Catholicism became a menace, and then Moscow could cope with it. In like manner, the Bolsheviks encouraged reformistic schisms in the Greek Catholic church as well as independent sects. The purpose was to destroy the solid phalanx of Greek Catholicism.

During the Genoa Conference in 1922 Chicherin found himself seated opposite the Archbishop of Genoa at a small dinner given by the King of Italy aboard the cruiser Dante. The Archbishop inquired about the condition of Catholics in Soviet Russia. Thereupon Chicherin elaborated on the advantages of separation of church from state. Separation, the Bolsheviks believed, should arouse no serious objections among Roman Catholics. Independence made for greater virility. Official protection undermined moral fiber. Spain was an instance in point, Russians contended. Chicherin's remarks reflected this view. Archbishop Signori listened with rapt attention; then he rose, clinked his wine-glass to Chicherin's, and said: "I thoroughly agree with you." The Archbishop's view was not that of the Vatican as a whole, yet important influences within the walls of the Curia felt that at least in Russia the new status might prove of practical benefit.

Father Walsh constituted the chief obstacle to the successful consummation of the Pope's plan. The Bolsheviks found him "most objectionable, proud, and inclined to make a terrible scandal out of every little issue." At one time they even suspected him of contacts with the United States Steel Corporation. He had come to Russia in 1922 to administer relief in Russia on behalf of world Catholic organizations, and to act as the Vatican's plenipotentiary. His implacable and undisguised enmity soon caused difficulties. First he demanded that his food shipments for the famine sufferers be accompanied by foreign monks—mostly Italian. This the Bolsheviks could not allow; they expected the starving to be fed bread without religion. Then he proposed a method of money transmittances from foreign countries to Russia and from Russia abroad which the Bolsheviks interpreted as an effort to establish financial contacts between Roman Catholicism in the Soviet Union and the White émigrés in Europe. The bitterest feud arose over the question of church property. The Bolsheviks, having nationalized all property in Russia, nationalized also the churches, but were willing to grant them to religious communities for use. This was an issue on which Roman Catholicism had fought unyieldingly through the ages. The church is sacred and remains sacred and in the hands of the faithful forever, is Rome's principle. Was not Thomas à Becket killed on this account? The stand of the Petrograd Catholics had become particularly unrelenting, and the Bolsheviks finally agreed on a formula, limited in time and to Petrograd, which settled the conflict. But Father Walsh, the Bolsheviks declare, immediately informed the Vatican that this formula applied to all Russia, so that when Jordansky arrived in Rome to negotiate with Macchi-Venturi, Cardinal Ledochovski's assistant in the Jesuit order, he was told that the problem no longer existed. He likewise learned that modifications suggested by Walsh to a draft Bolshevik agreement had been submitted to Rome as accepted by Moscow. Here again, therefore, Father Macchi-Venturi appeared to be under the impression that all moot questions had been solved. The Jordansky-Venturi conferences that had given promise of a settlement accordingly proved abortive as a result of the strategy of Walsh.

In 1924 a change of attitude became noticeable in both camps. The Bolsheviks had obtained British, Italian, and French de jure recognition. Signs were not wanting that

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they would patch up a peace with Patriarch Tikhon. The Vatican, on the other hand, began to orient itself on the White emigration in Europe. A group of prominent Russian noble families living in exile had adopted Roman Catholicism, and the Curia, remembering that the nobility in Russia and even the royal family had at various times in history toyed with the idea of conversion to the Roman church—see, for instance, the rumor that Alexander I had accepted Catholicism before death, and the practice in certain Russian circles of employing Catholic teachers—changed its tactics and commenced to place its hope on political developments in Russia which would sweep away the Bolsheviks. The Vatican now became indifferent to the Soviet Union, and prospects of an agreement grew more distant.

Father Walsh was succeeded in 1924 by a German named Germann who, in June, was joined by Marquis Ray, an Italian. Although these representatives of the Vatican impressed the Bolsheviks with their superior tact and greater tolerance, the obstacles remained insurmountable. Germann and Ray left Moscow in September, 1925.

The Bolsheviks, nevertheless, had not despaired of an understanding with Rome on practical problems. In 1925 Chicherin and Krestinsky handed Pacelli, the Papal Nuncio at Berlin, two documents—one outlining Soviet principles in Roman Catholic church matters, the other dealing concretely with the appointment of bishops, the transmission of Vatican funds to the Russian church, and education. In the matter of moneys and schools there was and is a feeling that if the Vatican respected Soviet laws—and nothing else could be expected—an accord would present no great difficulties. As to bishops, the Bolsheviks preferred a preliminary agreement on their part about the candidate, or they would probably be satisfied should the Vatican consent in advance to appoint only Russians. Their objection was to Poles who might further the national interests of their country. The Russians likewise objected to the publication in Russia of papal bulls and to uncensored communication between the Russian hierarchy of the Roman Catholic church and Rome.

The Vatican kept the Soviet documents for one year and then returned a reply on three of the twelve or more questions involved. In 1927 Rome intimated that the Soviet proposal did not satisfy. The negotiations were never resumed. Today the church in Russia has no definite legal status. The Vatican, in the absence of its own representative, has on numerous occasions availed itself of the friendly services of accredited diplomatic agents of foreign states at Moscow. During Wirth's term as German chancellor, Brockdorff-Rantzau was frequently burdened with what for him was the unwelcome task of intervening with Chicherin on behalf of the Vatican. More recently, Herbette, the late French ambassador, regarded himself as a sort of papal legate. In 1925 a man reputed to be a private French citizen named d'Herbigny came to Moscow under Herbette's protection. D'Herbigny, in fact, was a Catholic bishop, and he immediately set to work ordaining a complete list of Russian bishops and reconstituting the Catholic clergy which had been disorganized by the new state of affairs in Russia. He did without Soviet consent and previous knowledge what Moscow would have allowed only on conditions carefully laid down after consultation with the Vatican. Not only the Bolsheviks were furious. Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau regarded Herbette's step as an intolerable attempt to place the Roman Catholic church in Russia under the French aegis. Herbette's interest for the Vatican thus served to worsen Soviet relations with his own country.

Papal envoys at Tokyo, Kovno, and other capitals have, on occasion, interceded with Soviet agents on behalf of Catholic priests under trial in Russia. This and similar issues might conceivably be regulated by an agreement between Moscow and the papacy. The Bolsheviks do not want the Vatican's de jure recognition nor would they recognize the Vatican. In this respect, the recent treaty between the Pope and Mussolini changes nothing. Yet the Soviet Government is prepared to consider the international character of the Roman Catholic church and to permit a relationship between its center and the Russian section.

It seems incongruous that two institutions so different and distant as the Roman Catholic church and the Bolshevik state should have sought to bridge the gap that separated them. Yet such a desire moved both sides. Practical considerations ruled. Ideologically, of course, no common ground exists on which they could meet. The militant atheism of the Communists and their doctrine of revolution must be as abhorrent to the Vatican as the theology, highly developed private-property sense, and conservatism of the Roman Catholic church are to the Kremlin. The papal philosophy of temporal and clerical condominium confronts not only the diametrically opposed Bolshevik principle of disestablishment but also the Soviet tendency to use the state in checking church power. Opportunist considerations may conceivably bring the realists in the Kremlin and the Vatican to arrive at a *modus vivendi*—although the likelihood continues to diminish—but no such development could disguise the fundamental gulf and hostility that must divide the Pope of Rome from the ruling disciples of Karl Marx in Moscow.

Contributors to This Issue

GARDNER JACKSON is a Boston newspaper man, best known for his work in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti.

PAUL Y. ANDERSON is the national correspondent of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch.*

FELIX MORLEY is the Geneva representative of the League of Nations Association of the United States.

EDA LOU WALTON is assistant professor of English at New York University.

SIDNEY B. FAY is professor of European history at Smith College.

JOSHUA KUNITZ is author of "Russian Literature and the Jew."

WILL IRWIN is author of "The House That Shadows Build."

DAVIS R. DEWEY is professor of economics and statistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

CLIFTON P. FADIMAN is head of the editorial department of Simon and Schuster.

MARK VAN DOREN is editor of "An Autobiography of America."

IRWIN EDMAN is assistant professor of philosophy at Columbia University.

LEWIS S. GANNETT is a contributing editor of *The Nation.*

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH is dramatic editor of *The Nation.*

LOUIS FISCHER, Moscow correspondent of *The Nation,* will soon publish "The Soviet in World Affairs."

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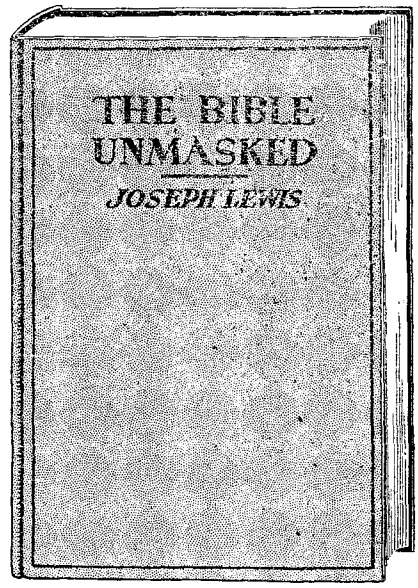

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